The Fourth List

A World Assembly for Human Understanding

Subhash Trivedi

Reader's edition 0.1 · compiled from the founding drafts of 24 November 2026.
Founding drafts for open examination. Licence not yet selected.

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Contents

Orientation 1

Part One: The Idea 5

1 Why a world assembly for human understanding 6

2 Philosophical foundations 11

3 The four lists and the method of inquiry 16

4 The fourth list: what we will and will not do 26

5 Education and human living 34

Part Two: The Foundational Charter 37

6 The Foundational Charter 38

Part Three: The Architecture 45

7 Knowledge architecture 46

8 The open protocol 50

9 Federated digital infrastructure and AI 54

10 Offline communities and independent initiatives 60

11 Participation and contribution 64

12 Governance and institutional architecture 69

13 Economic architecture 77

14 Motivation and measurement 80

Part Four: Founding and Practice 83

15 The founding process 84

16 Precedents: organizations to learn from 90

17 Community Handbook 92

Part Five: Open Questions 119

18 What remains undecided 120

19 Critical review of the founding architecture 126

20 Invitation 152

Reference 153

A Open Protocol 154

B Governance Framework 175
C Platform Architecture 195
D Foundational Question Bank 216
E Illustrative records 238
F Founding decisions register 241
G Provenance and editorial notes 248
Glossary 257
Index 262

Orientation

What The Fourth List is

The Founding Proposal opens with these lines:

> Is a universally verifiable understanding of reality possible?
>
> If it is, can human beings collectively investigate it, independently verify it, demonstrate it through living and make it accessible to every human being?
>
> The Fourth List is an open global initiative to investigate these possibilities. It is being developed as an open protocol, an open-source digital platform and a federated network of independent communities working together, both online and offline.
>
> No philosophical tradition holds privileged status. No institution holds authority over truth. No human being is required to surrender their existing understanding, only to remain willing to examine it.
>
> What can we understand together, and what are we willing to do, or refuse to do, in light of that understanding?
>
> We are not inviting humanity to join a finished institution. We are inviting humanity to build it together.

The name refers to four public records that inquiry keeps: what we agree on, what we do not agree on, what we need to understand together, and, fourth, what we will do and what we will not do. They are explained in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4.

Status. Everything in this book is a founding draft for public examination. It is not an adopted charter, an established institution, an approved technical specification or a philosophical verdict.

Where the drafts appear

The initiative was set out in eight documents dated 24 November 2026. Seven are founding drafts: the Founding Proposal, the Foundational Charter, the Open Protocol, the Governance Framework, the Platform Architecture, the Community Handbook and the Foundational Question Bank. The eighth is a Critical Review of the other seven. This book gathers all eight in an order meant for a first-time reader:

- **Part One: The Idea** (Chapters 1–5) is the heart of the Founding Proposal: why the initiative exists, its philosophical foundations, the four lists and the method of inquiry, the fourth list itself, and the place of education and living.
- **Part Two: The Foundational Charter** (Chapter 6) is the shortest complete statement of the initiative: twelve articles setting out its purpose, commitments and freedoms.
- **Part Three: The Architecture** (Chapters 7–14) explains how the initiative would work: records, the open protocol, digital infrastructure and AI, offline communities, participation, governance, economics, and motivation and measurement.
- **Part Four: Founding and Practice** (Chapters 15–17) covers the proposed founding process, precedents to learn from, and the Community Handbook, a practical guide for anyone who wants to start a group.
- **Part Five: Open Questions** (Chapters 18–20) gathers what remains undecided, the Critical Review and a closing invitation.
- **Reference** (Appendices A–G) holds the detailed specifications (Open Protocol, Governance Framework, Platform Architecture), the Foundational Question Bank, illustrative records, the register of founding decisions, and notes on provenance. A Glossary and an Index follow.

A table in Appendix G shows where each part of each original draft now appears. The few editorial changes are listed in that appendix and in the book's change log.

Reading paths

- **New to the idea:** read Chapters 1–4, then the Charter (Chapter 6). That is about a quarter of the book and gives the whole idea.
- **Want to start a local group:** Chapters 1–4, then the Community Handbook (Chapter 17) and the Question Bank.
- **Developer or protocol designer:** Chapters 3, 7–9, then Appendix A and Appendix C.
- **Interested in governance and institutions:** Chapters 6 and 12–13, then Appendix B.
- **Reviewer or critic:** Chapter 18 and the Critical Review (Chapter 19), then the founding decisions.

How to read the status labels

The drafts mark carefully how settled each statement is. These labels recur throughout:

Label	Meaning in the drafts
Founding commitment or **accepted direction**	A direction explicitly accepted at the founding. In the drafts' words, "a direction accepted by the initial proposer is not an adopted decision of a global community." The Governance Framework calls these *foundational directions*.
Accepted hypothesis (H1, H2)	One of the two philosophical hypotheses adopted as a starting point for investigation: that a common, independently verifiable reality may exist (H1), and that every genuine contradiction can ultimately be resolved through sufficient understanding (H2). "The two accepted hypotheses are not established knowledge." See Chapter 2.
Working design	"A proposal developed during drafting and retained for examination, even when it follows from a confirmed direction": a

Label	Meaning in the drafts
	proposed mechanism, open to collective examination and local experimentation. Most of the detailed procedures in this book are working designs.
Open question or **open decision**	A question not yet settled. A proposed pilot mechanism does not ratify an answer.
MUST, SHOULD, MAY, OPEN	Used in the Open Protocol for proposed conformance rules, recommended practice, optional choices and unresolved questions.

Names and history

A few names recur that need a word of explanation. Each is also in the Glossary.

- The initiative was first proposed in November 2026 as **The Third List: A World Assembly of Philosophers**, in a 17-slide presentation that the drafts call the **original presentation**. It was renamed *The Fourth List* when a fourth record, of what humanity will and will not do, was added (see Identity and purpose).
- The founding proposal was worked out in a **founding discussion** on 24 November 2026, organised in 78 numbered sections. The person who proposed the initiative is called the **initial proposer**. The decisions reached in that discussion, and the status of each, are listed in the founding decisions register.
- **K4M2A** is the organisation with which the initiative originates. The "four" in its name is one source of the name *The Fourth List*.

Part One: The Idea

1 Why a world assembly for human understanding

The premise: why a world assembly for human understanding?

Humanity has made extraordinary progress in what it can do. Has it made comparable progress in understanding what it should do? The original presentation begins with this distinction. Practical decisions often depend on deeper ideas about the human being, justice, well-being and our place in nature. Science, policy and engineering matter, but so do the philosophical assumptions guiding them.

Present challenge	Underlying question
Conflict	What makes peaceful coexistence possible?
The planet	What is humanity's relationship with nature?
Prosperity	What does it mean for a human being to have enough?
Technology	What should our growing capabilities be used for?

The answers we live by become the systems we build. Education depends on what we think a human being is capable of becoming. An economy depends on what we understand by needs, prosperity and enough. Governance depends on what we understand by just relationships and institutions. AI systems depend on what counts as a good decision for human beings. These are not merely independent practical problems; their philosophical foundations deserve examination. The relationships among them must themselves be investigated.

Philosophy has spent centuries examining fundamental questions. Different traditions bring different assumptions, concepts and modes of inquiry.

Mutual examination can make a claim more useful when others can understand, challenge and test its grounds. The original proposal invited philosophers because of this depth and plurality, not because philosophers alone can understand reality. Participation is now intended to extend beyond professional philosophy.

AI adds urgency. It can analyze and recommend, automate decisions, scale actions, translate and compare arguments. It does not settle what is worth doing, what human well-being consists in, which decisions should be delegated, whose interests should count or the limits of optimization. These are matters for human inquiry. AI may assist but must not manufacture consensus or determine philosophical truth.

Identity and purpose

Founding commitment. The name is The Fourth List. The subtitle is A World Assembly for Human Understanding. The initiative was originally called The Third List; the initial proposer explicitly chose the new name after introducing the question of what humanity will not do. The number four also creates a natural connection with K4M2A. This is a connection of origin and identity, not a grant of ownership or permanent control to K4M2A. The original working subtitle, A World Assembly of Philosophers, described the people who gather; the revised subtitle describes the purpose and avoids limiting participation to academic philosophers.

Purpose: To investigate whether a universally verifiable understanding of reality is possible, make that understanding accessible to every human being, and examine how humanity can live in accordance with it.

This formulation includes the responsibilities to facilitate independent verification, education and demonstration through living, and to examine what such understanding means for human conduct. The fourth list adds a practical question: what will we undertake, and what will we voluntarily refrain from doing?

The starting decision was whether the endeavour exists to find common ground between different philosophical understandings or to investigate

universal verifiability itself. The latter was explicitly chosen. Common ground may be a useful outcome, but the institution must not reduce its purpose to reconciliation of beliefs. Its aim is examination of reality, not agreement by compromise or persuasion. It seeks neither a universal doctrine nor an assertion that any existing tradition has already resolved every question.

Not the objective	Proposed objective
Agreement between belief systems	Understanding that can be independently examined and verified
A synthesis of existing philosophies	Examination of reality itself
A universally accepted doctrine	A universally accessible understanding
Consensus through compromise	Agreement arising from understanding
Intellectual superiority of a tradition	Examination irrespective of tradition
Predetermined conclusions	Inquiry open to its actual findings

Four levels of ambition

These levels were proposed as a progression of responsibility rather than guaranteed achievements. Each is legitimate only insofar as it contributes to the purpose.

Level	Ambition
1. Document understanding	Preserve a public record of what participants agree and disagree on. This gives inquiry a collective memory.
2. Advance understanding	Develop ways for different traditions and individuals to examine and potentially resolve fundamental disagreements.
3. Investigate universal understanding	Examine whether reality, the human being and relationships are universally verifiable irrespective of culture, geography or belief.
4. Translate understanding into living	Facilitate the examination of education, economics, governance, technology and social arrangements in light of any understanding established.

Scope

Founding commitment. The scope is reality in its entirety, including existence and consciousness. The alternative was to limit the inquiry to

what is necessary for living harmoniously with other humans and nature. The broader scope was chosen because restricting investigation in advance could exclude the very understanding needed to examine human living.

Domain	Central question
Existence	What exists, and what is its nature?
Human being	What constitutes a human being, including the nature of consciousness?
Knowledge	What can human beings know, and how can they verify it?
Human purpose	What constitutes fulfilment in human life?
Relationships and society	What makes harmonious human coexistence possible?
Nature	What is humanity's relationship with the rest of existence?

Questions about education, economics, governance, sustainability and AI may be downstream applications of foundational understanding, while observations from those fields may also inform foundational inquiry. No sequence is imposed before its grounds have been examined.

What is different from a conventional conference?

Existing congresses, publications and philosophical discussions are valuable. The proposal adds a cumulative and publicly examinable outcome. It does not claim that no previous endeavour has developed any of these mechanisms.

Conventional conference output	Additional outcome proposed here
Presentations and debates	Documented agreement with individual grounds
Published arguments	Visible, precisely documented disagreement
New contacts and networks	An evolving agenda for further inquiry
Declarations or resolutions	Traceable voluntary commitments, with their grounds and evidence of implementation distinguished

A gathering can end; inquiry can continue. The potential long-term uses include philosophical research, education, public reasoning, the examination of living and responsible AI design. The world assembly is one means

of advancing a continuous endeavour, not the entire endeavour. Over decades, the network could preserve a living record of what people have understood, what has been independently examined and what is not yet understood, without claiming to speak for all humanity.

2 Philosophical foundations

First principles of inquiry

Working design. The first principles below were proposed to guide participation without prescribing a philosophical conclusion. They are commitments to the conduct of inquiry and must themselves remain examinable.

Principle	Meaning
Reality over authority	A proposition must be examinable independently of the person or tradition presenting it.
Understanding over agreement	Agreement without understanding is insufficient.
Verification over conviction	The strength of a belief does not establish validity.
Inquiry over persuasion	Seek understanding rather than a victory over another person.
Openness over allegiance	Every position, including those of the founders, remains open to examination.
Clarity over consensus	An unresolved disagreement is preferable to a false agreement.
Accessibility over exclusivity	If understanding is universal, its verification should not depend on membership of a cultural, religious or institutional group.
Living as a domain of verification	Claims concerning human living must also be examined in living, where appropriate.

Three starting approaches were considered. Beginning with no philosophical assumptions maximizes openness but inquiry still needs working assumptions. Requiring minimal shared philosophical premises can create coherence but may exclude alternative understandings before they are examined. The recommended approach is shared methodology: participants agree to a process of examination rather than accept conclusions in advance. Even that methodology is open to examination. A materialist,

an idealist, a Buddhist, a Madhyasth Darshan practitioner or an agnostic should be able to participate on this basis.

Proposed individual conditions for participation:

- I am willing to examine my own understanding.
- I am willing to understand another person's position before evaluating it.
- I accept that my present understanding may be incomplete or incorrect.
- I will distinguish what I know, what I believe and what I do not know.
- I will provide the grounds for my assertions.
- I am willing to revise my position when I find sufficient grounds to do so.
- I will not treat authority, popularity or tradition alone as proof of truth.

Foundational hypothesis of common reality

Accepted hypothesis H1. A common reality, capable of being understood and independently verified by human beings, may exist. The Fourth List exists to investigate this possibility.

The alternative of starting with the assertion that reality is the same for every human being was considered. The nature of reality, including whether there is one objective reality, remains an open question. The capacity of humans to understand it is not established by adopting the hypothesis. The institution must be able to investigate findings that do not support its initial expectation.

Foundational hypothesis of resolvability

Accepted hypothesis H2. Every genuine contradiction can ultimately be resolved through sufficient understanding.

This is the exact direction chosen at the founding, rather than merely a weaker commitment not to give up on unresolved questions. It remains a hypothesis, not a demonstrated philosophical result or a guarantee that any particular disagreement will resolve within a given period. Neither the

age of a disagreement nor its apparent difficulty establishes permanent irresolvability.

A genuine contradiction must be distinguished from differences in terminology, preferences, circumstances, scope and incomplete information. Two claims may seem inconsistent when they apply to different conditions. One may be a normative preference rather than a claim about reality. The inquiry must identify the actual relation between propositions before declaring a contradiction. If an objection remains unresolved, its continued presence is valuable information rather than an institutional failure to conceal.

The hypothesis implies that disagreement is a starting point rather than the desired conclusion; intellectual diversity is a resource; differences can be investigated rather than simply managed; and resolution must arise through understanding rather than compromise, persuasion or majority opinion. The process of inquiry may need to continue across generations. What would count as evidence against this hypothesis remains an open research question.

Individual understanding, collective inquiry

Founding commitment. Understanding is an individual human achievement. Inquiry can be a collective endeavour.

A person can communicate understanding. A group can facilitate examination. An institution can preserve arguments, methods and evidence. No person, group or institution can understand on behalf of another person. This principle grounds the rest of the institutional architecture: signatures belong to individuals; verification is independently undertaken; education must enable people to understand rather than merely accept conclusions; and the institution must not become an authority on what humanity is required to believe.

What constitutes verification?

Different traditions recognize different means of acquiring and examining knowledge. A methodology that recognizes only one mode in advance may exclude entire domains of inquiry. A methodology that accepts every claimed means without scrutiny may fail to distinguish belief from knowledge. The following are proposed modes of examination, each subject to review regarding its suitability, scope and limitations.

Method	What it examines and what must be distinguished
Empirical observation	Observable physical reality. Identify what was observed, the conditions and what has been inferred rather than directly observed.
Logical reasoning	Coherence, consistency and implications. Logical consistency alone does not establish that premises correspond to reality.
Experimentation	Claims testable under defined conditions. Record the procedure, limitations and outcomes, including contrary observations.
Self-observation	First-person experience and consciousness. Distinguish reported experience from interpretation and investigate independent accessibility.
Interpersonal verification	Whether another person can independently examine a communicated understanding. Agreement or repetition of a description alone is insufficient.
Lived demonstration	Claims about happiness, behaviour, relationships and society. Examine implications over time and in context without coercion or compromising privacy.

Proposed criteria for claims of universal verifiability:

Criterion	Requirement
Communicable	Can be explained to another human being.
Examinable	Grounds and means of inquiry are available for independent examination.
Consistent	Does not contain unresolved internal contradictions.
Independently verifiable	Validity does not depend on accepting a person's authority.
Open to challenge	Contrary observations and arguments can be examined.
Applicable	Where claims concern living, their implications can be examined through living.

These criteria are a proposed starting framework. The evidentiary threshold for different claim types remains undecided. A pathway may be universal in principle without every person having already undertaken it; necessary conditions and prerequisites must be stated. It is not enough

for many people to report an experience if the claim and the relevant inferences remain unexamined.

What constitutes resolution?

Agreement, understanding and verification are distinct achievements. Ten people may agree on something false. Ten people may disagree about something true. Two people can accept the same words while attaching different meanings to them. Consensus should be a record of inquiry, not its ultimate objective.

Level	Outcome
1. Linguistic clarity	Participants comprehend the meaning of each other's statements.
2. Intellectual agreement	Participants accept the same precisely stated conclusion.
3. Shared understanding	Participants independently comprehend the grounds of that conclusion.
4. Independent verification	Participants independently examine the conclusion against reality through appropriate methods.
5. Universal verifiability	Grounds and pathways are available in principle for other humans to undertake the same inquiry independently, subject to stated conditions.

These levels are a working distinction, not an automatic ladder or a guarantee. Agreement can be recorded without declaring resolution. The proposed standard is that resolution requires independent verification, not merely agreement among present participants. The network should record the scope and grounds of any claimed resolution, and challenges must remain examinable. A conclusion may be shared while the grounds for it differ. Those grounds must be preserved, not erased by a single consensus statement.

3 The four lists and the method of inquiry

The fourth list is introduced here and developed in Chapter 4. The record formats and procedures are specified in the Open Protocol, sections 05 to 07.

Four lists, four distinct records

The original presentation described one gathering producing three honest records, not three conclusions. The revised architecture retains those three inquiry records and adds a fourth record concerned with human conduct. Each is a living, scoped record. None represents humanity as a whole or establishes truth by unanimity.

List	Foundational question and purpose
01. Agreement	What do we agree on? Record common ground.
02. Disagreement	What do we not agree on? Identify unresolved differences in understanding.
03. Inquiry	What do we need to understand together? Advance collective understanding.
04. Commitment	What will we and what will we not do? Translate understanding into voluntary responsibility and restraint.

The first three lists concern the state and direction of inquiry. The fourth concerns the relationship between understanding and conduct. The fourth does not replace the first three or make them subordinate to a predetermined ethical conclusion.

List One: What we agree on

A public record of propositions unanimously accepted by the identified participating signatories, at a specified version and scope. Each record should contain:

- The precise proposition and definitions of important terms.
- The participating signatories, scope and date of agreement.
- Each individual's grounds for agreement, including differing grounds where applicable.
- Methods through which the proposition may be independently examined.
- Current verification status and relevant supporting or challenging records.
- Revision history and any subsequent changes to the scope or status of agreement.

Unanimity describes the defined group. It does not mean all humanity agrees, nor does it prove a proposition true. A community can agree on a proposition for different reasons. A record must not obscure such differences. How agreements remain accurate when new contributors arrive, withdraw or challenge a proposition remains open.

List Two: What we do not agree on

A public record of unresolved philosophical differences. Each record should contain the precise point of disagreement, the distinct positions, their supporting grounds and assumptions, relevant observations and terminology, and what would be required to advance the inquiry. Distinguish disagreement from uncertainty or lack of a position. Minority positions must not disappear because most participants reject them. The objective is not to archive opposing opinions as an end in itself but to understand why they diverge.

List Three: What we need to understand together

The third list is a living collective research agenda. The original phrase, What we need to agree on, was proposed for revision because understanding is the objective and agreement is an outcome, not an obligation. The working wording is What we need to understand together. Each record should include the question, why its resolution matters, dependencies on other questions, existing attempts, ongoing investigations and possible methods of inquiry.

The third list is the driving force of the research endeavour: the first two lists describe the present state of inquiry; the third directs attention to its future. A disagreement can simultaneously be on List Two and List Three, and a question may remain important after partial agreement. The lists are not mutually exclusive buckets. The detailed mechanisms for all four lists are working designs for contributors to refine.

List Four: What we will do and what we will not do

The fourth list is a living record of shared human commitments. It includes both responsibility (what participating people voluntarily undertake) and restraint (what they voluntarily refuse to undertake). A commitment may be shared before all philosophical disagreements are resolved. Its underlying claims may remain in Lists One, Two or Three. Signing a commitment does not verify its grounds or establish that it has been fulfilled.

Chapter 4 develops its philosophical purpose, candidate commitments, and proposed Declaration of Human Commitments. The exact eligibility and evidence requirements for inclusion in List Four are open. The record should distinguish acceptance of a proposition, acceptance of responsibility and observed conduct over time rather than reduce these to a single signature.

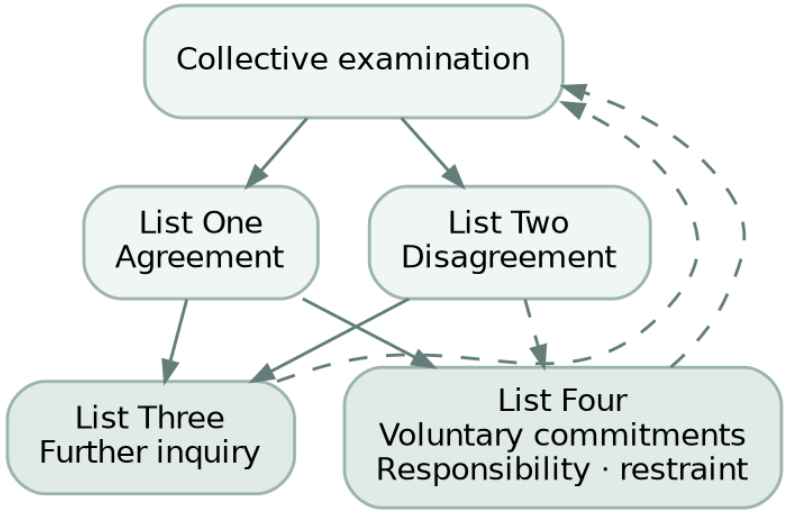

Figure 1: ***Figure 1. The four lists: inquiry and voluntary conduct.*** *Lists One to Three record the state and direction of inquiry. List Four records voluntary commitments, whose grounds and implementation can inform continued inquiry. A commitment is not proof of agreement or truth.*

The response mechanism

The original presentation proposed a clear proposition, private written Yes or No answers, examination of reasons and documentation. Recording an independent initial position can reduce conformity and deference to prominent participants. However, ambiguous or conditional answers cannot be represented accurately by forced binary choices. The proposed expanded response set is:

Response	Meaning
Yes	I accept the proposition.
No	I reject the proposition.
Undetermined	I have not reached a conclusion.
Conditional	My answer depends on stated conditions.
Needs clarification	The proposition is insufficiently defined.

For example, Can human beings know the nature of reality? may receive a qualified yes, a yes under certain conditions, a no if knowing means complete knowledge, a request to define reality or an honest statement of uncertainty. Forcing these into Yes or No can manufacture false agreement or disagreement. Participants should record grounds and have the opportunity to reassess their answers after inquiry. If wording is ambiguous, revise it and preserve the version history. Revisions motivated by better understanding should be treated as progress.

For the fourth list, a response to a normative proposition and a voluntary undertaking are separate records. A person can agree that a practice is inappropriate without yet undertaking a commitment; another can make a conditional commitment with a clearly specified scope. An absence of a signature is not automatically a disagreement. The existing response categories and independent reassessment process still apply to examining the underlying claims.

Interconnected questions

Founding commitment. Maintain a living architecture of foundational questions, identifying their interdependencies and the sequence in which they may need to be resolved. Some questions may depend on others: education may depend on what humans are capable of becoming; economics may depend on the meaning of human needs and prosperity. The dependencies are themselves open to examination. The resulting knowledge graph is more useful than a flat numbered list because it can show where resolving one question may advance many others.

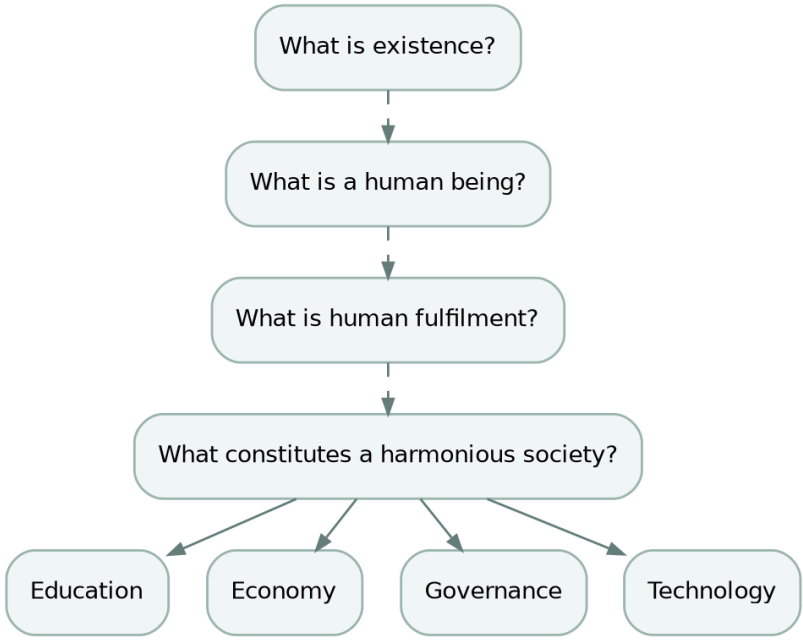

Figure 2: ***Figure 2. Illustrative dependencies between foundational questions.*** *Possible dependencies: existence → human being → human fulfilment → harmonious society → education, economy, governance and technology. The dependencies are themselves examinable.*

Prioritization criteria

No central authority should assign research priorities. The proposed criteria help contributors identify where work may be meaningful; they are not a mandatory scoring system.

Criterion	Question to examine
Foundational significance	How many or which other questions depend on this question?
Universal relevance	Does it concern human beings irrespective of culture, geography or belief?
Consequences for living	Would its resolution materially change human living or institutions?
Present understanding	What has already been investigated, and what is still unknown?

Criterion	Question to examine
Possibility of investigation	Are there identifiable paths for advancing understanding?

Philosophical significance must not be confused with immediate urgency. The nature of consciousness may have far-reaching consequences even if AI governance appears more immediately pressing. These criteria should inform a contributor's choice, not restrict the freedom to investigate.

Complete systems and individual propositions

Founding commitment. Facilitate the examination of both complete philosophical systems and individual propositions while preserving their relationships.

Individual propositions enable people from different traditions to examine shared questions without accepting an entire system. However, removing a claim from its original context may distort its meaning, and a system's internal relationships may be important to its explanatory claims. Examining only entire systems preserves their architecture but makes joint investigation and comparison unwieldy. Both forms must coexist.

A system may present its understanding of reality, concepts, propositions, their dependencies and its proposed methods of verification. Individual propositions can then be examined separately while their original context is retained. Participants need not accept the entire system to examine a particular claim. No system is accepted or rejected solely on the basis of origin, historical significance, institutional status or popularity. Internal coherence and correspondence to reality are distinct questions.

Seven-stage architecture of dialogue

A debate may reward defending a position. The proposed dialogue process aims instead at understanding and examination.

1. **Independent position:** Each person records their present understanding and grounds before collective discussion.

2. **Mutual comprehension:** Participants articulate the other person's position until that person confirms it has been sufficiently understood.
3. **Identification of differences:** Establish exactly where propositions, meanings, observations or conclusions diverge.
4. **Identification of foundations:** Examine definitions, assumptions, reasoning, observations and proposed methods underlying each position.
5. **Collective examination:** Investigate competing claims through appropriate methods of verification. Record missing evidence where immediate resolution is not possible.
6. **Independent reassessment:** Each participant determines whether their understanding has changed and why, without pressure to agree.
7. **Documentation:** Record what has been understood, clarified, agreed upon, independently examined and what remains unresolved.

A dialogue may span multiple meetings, years of study, experiments or lived demonstration. The institution must accommodate this duration. It should not require every dialogue to end in a vote or resolution.

Cumulative inquiry

Every subsequent inquiry should be able to build on prior work. Preserve the questions already examined, arguments already considered, misunderstandings already clarified, methods of verification already attempted, reasons for changed understanding and remaining obstacles to resolution. This is a collective memory not only of conclusions but of how understanding develops across individuals, institutions and generations. A later inquiry may repeat a test where necessary, but should be able to discover why it is repeating it.

Pathways to understanding

Founding commitment. Develop and document pathways through which another human being can independently examine and verify philosophical claims.

A contribution should distinguish the understanding asserted from the process by which another person may arrive at it. A claim without an established pathway may be documented as a hypothesis rather than verified knowledge. This is not a rule excluding new ideas; it is a rule for representing their status accurately.

Contribution field	Question to answer
Understanding	What do you claim to understand?
Grounds	On what basis do you make this claim?
Process	How did you arrive at this understanding?
Verification	How can another person independently examine it?
Conditions	Are there prerequisites, definitions or contextual conditions?
Limitations	What remains outside the claim or is still unresolved?

The record should also identify potential contrary observations, expected findings and the relationship to existing inquiry. Standards for evaluating a pathway must be developed openly. A philosopher's contribution is not merely an explanation of reality, but potentially a means for other humans to examine it independently.

Status of understanding

The following seven statuses are proposed. They distinguish questions from hypotheses and preserve the difference between a claim, a pathway and a verification record.

Status	Meaning
Question	Something has been identified for investigation.
Hypothesis	A possible explanation awaits verification.
Articulated understanding	A person claims understanding and provides grounds.
Examinable understanding	A pathway for independent examination has been established or documented for assessment.
Independently verified	Multiple people report independent verification through documented methods, subject to examination of those reports.

Status	Meaning
Universally verifiable	Sufficient grounds are proposed for considering a pathway universally accessible, subject to continued examination and stated conditions.
Challenged	A substantive objection or contrary observation requires further inquiry.

These are not necessarily linear stages, nor do labels prove the truth of a claim. A challenged proposition may already have prior verification records; the challenge must be preserved rather than erase history. Exact criteria for these labels and their scope remain open. The status of a question, the status of a proposition, and the status of its verification records may need to be represented separately in the protocol.

Procedural authority, not authority over truth

Approach to declaring resolution	Limitation
Majority voting	Popularity does not establish truth.
Unanimous agreement	Agreement does not establish verification.
Expert committee	Expertise does not guarantee understanding or establish a conclusion on another person's behalf.
Distributed independent verification	Preserves individual responsibility but requires rigorous, transparent standards.

The working recommendation is distributed independent verification. Each person is responsible for their own examination; the network records who has verified what, by what method and under what conditions; substantive objections remain available; committees or maintainers administer standards rather than determine philosophical truth. No proposition becomes immune to examination. The precise evidence and standards required for a status label remain unresolved. Operational governance can adopt a protocol version without declaring a philosophical question resolved.

4 The fourth list: what we will and will not do

In the drafts, this material formed part of "Education and human living". It is placed here, directly after the four lists, because the fourth list gives the initiative its name. Each candidate restraint is annotated in the Question Bank, and the commitment lifecycle is specified in Open Protocol section 08.

Four dimensions of the endeavour

The question introduced by the initial proposer was whether humanity should also align on what it will not do. Humanity may not have reached agreement on an ideal society, but participants can investigate whether there are things no human being, organization or nation should undertake. Technological capability can expand independently of understanding about its appropriate use. This is a reason to investigate restraint as well as positive responsibility, rather than wait for every metaphysical question to be resolved.

Dimension	Fundamental question
Understanding	What can humanity establish as universally verifiable?
Aspiration	What does humanity collectively want to achieve?
Commitment	What are we willing to undertake together?
Restraint	What are we collectively unwilling to do?

These dimensions are not four new philosophical conclusions or four stages of proof. They describe different questions that may be examined in relation to one another. The first three lists organize inquiry; the fourth gives responsibility and restraint a distinct record.

Candidate restraints

The following twelve statements are preserved from the founding discussion as initial candidates for collective examination. None is represented as a commitment adopted by the founder, by a community or by humanity as a whole. Precise definitions, grounds, limits, difficult cases and implications must be examined before any voluntary undertaking is recorded.

Domain	Candidate commitment for examination
Human dignity	We will not treat another human being merely as a resource for our own benefit.
Conflict	We will not initiate violence as a means of resolving differences in understanding.
Prosperity	We will not pursue our prosperity through the deprivation of others.
Nature	We will not knowingly destroy the conditions necessary for life on Earth.
Knowledge	We will not knowingly present belief as verified knowledge.
Freedom	We will not compel another human being to accept a philosophical or religious belief.
Education	We will not deliberately prevent another human being from developing their capacity to understand.
Economics	We will not build economic systems whose success depends on human suffering or exploitation.
Technology	We will not develop technologies without examining their consequences for humanity and nature.
Governance	We will not treat power as evidence of correctness.
Future generations	We will not pursue present benefits by knowingly compromising the ability of future generations to live well.
Artificial intelligence	We will not surrender human responsibility for decisions merely because machines can make them.

These are starting formulations rather than enforceable rules. For example, the meaning of initiating violence, the distinction between deprivation and trade-offs, what counts as knowingly causing harm, and how responsibility relates to delegation require further examination. The initiative must not silently resolve those ambiguities through drafting. A candidate may be revised, narrowed, rejected or replaced through inquiry. The original wording and grounds for revisions should remain traceable.

Responsibility and restraint as complementary dimensions

The proposed two-part structure of the fourth list is preserved below. The entries are organizing questions, not settled obligations. Independent contributors should be free to formulate positive commitments as well as restraints, rather than simply invert a prohibition and assume that the resulting statement is universally appropriate.

Domain	Paired questions for examination
Human relationships	Responsibility: What will we do for one another? Restraint: What will we not do to one another?
Nature	Responsibility: What will we do to enrich nature? Restraint: What will we not do to degrade nature?
Knowledge	Responsibility: What will we do to advance understanding? Restraint: What will we not do to obstruct understanding?
Technology	Responsibility: What will we develop? Restraint: What will we refuse to develop?
Economy	Responsibility: How will we create prosperity? Restraint: How will we refuse to create wealth?
Society	Responsibility: What institutions will we build? Restraint: What institutional practices will we refuse?

Agreement without identical philosophical foundations

A materialist, a Buddhist, a Christian, an atheist and a Madhyasth Darshan practitioner may all independently arrive at the conclusion that exploitation is unacceptable, while holding very different views about consciousness, reality and the grounds for that conclusion. Their common commitment need not require any of them to adopt another person's metaphysics. Each person's reasoning must be preserved separately. Further inquiry may examine whether the differing grounds can be reconciled. The shared commitment can be examined through living while inquiry continues.

This draws on a lesson from the Global Ethic: common conclusions can coexist with distinct philosophical grounds. It is not a proposal to treat a minimum consensus as proof of a universally appropriate way of living. The commitment may be shared even while its justification remains contested. Where a normative statement is unanimously accepted by a defined group, it may appear in List One; a conflicting account of its grounds can

appear in List Two; and unresolved questions about conduct and justification can appear in List Three. List Four records the voluntary undertaking itself. No signature automatically migrates across lists.

Understanding, agreement, commitment and demonstration

Achievement	Meaning
Understanding	I understand why something is so.
Agreement	I accept that a proposition is valid or that a form of conduct is appropriate.
Commitment	I voluntarily accept responsibility for acting in accordance with it.
Demonstration	My conduct over time provides examinable evidence concerning that undertaking.

These conduct distinctions are additional to the five levels of resolution and seven epistemic classifications, which they leave unchanged. They do not form a compulsory ladder of human worth. A person may accept an ethical proposition without undertaking it, undertake it without adequate understanding, or sincerely intend to fulfil it while failing in practice. A self-report, a signed declaration, another person's observation and an independently examined demonstration are different forms of record. A particular example of behaviour does not by itself establish that the underlying philosophical proposition is universally valid.

The question recorded as founding decision 78 was whether signing should suffice for inclusion or whether agreement, commitment and demonstration should be publicly distinguishable with appropriate privacy protections. The recommendation was to retain all three as separate states. The initial proposer requested revision of the founding document, but did not separately approve the exact admission or demonstration criteria. The proposed model therefore distinguishes candidate statements, scoped agreement, voluntary undertaking and evidence of conduct, without declaring any of them a final inclusion threshold. The fourth list should ultimately examine not merely what people say, but whether people can live what they say.

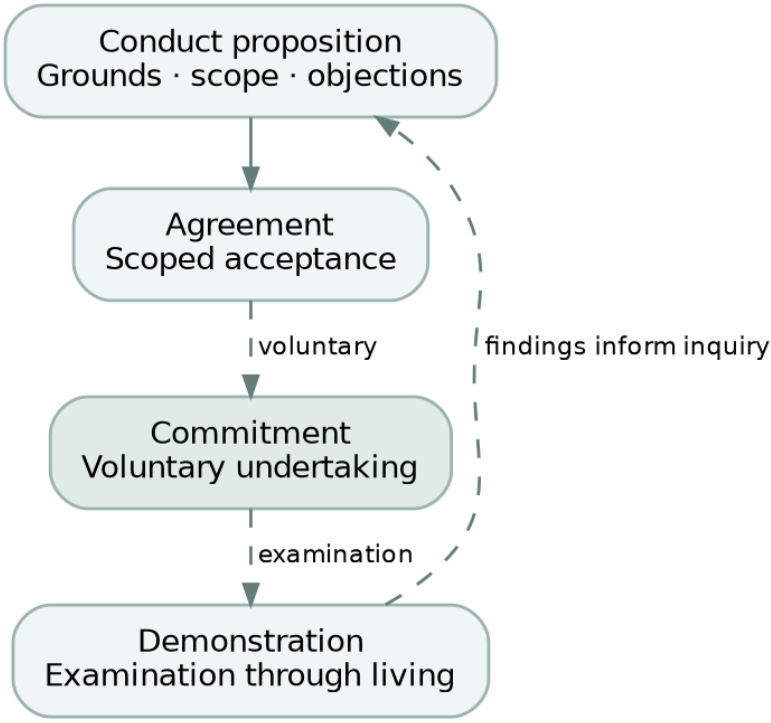

Figure 3: ***Figure 3. From understanding to conduct: separate records.*** *The proposition, any agreement, undertaking and evidence of conduct are distinct, linked records. The pathway is illustrative, not a mandatory sequence or proof of universal validity.*

A living Declaration of Human Commitments

The proposed Declaration of Human Commitments can be developed as a living, versioned expression of this list, not a separate fifth list, a finished ethical code or a claim to represent the whole human population.

Every commitment in a declaration should be connected to its philosophical foundations, the individual grounds of its signatories, implications for living, methods for examining implementation, remaining objections and unresolved questions, and relevant demonstrations by individuals, families, organizations and communities. It should identify precisely who has agreed or undertaken it and to which version. The declaration must

distinguish the agreed content from the scope of its endorsement. A person who has not signed is not thereby considered opposed to the statement or incapable of understanding. An organization's endorsement cannot substitute for the independent understanding or consent of its members.

The declaration can develop incrementally through independent groups and federated publication. No central authority is necessary to approve the existence of a candidate declaration. Different communities can preserve alternative formulations, link their reasoning and compare outcomes. Claims of universal validity remain open to examination; a shared declaration is not an imposed global law, religious obligation or compulsory moral membership test.

The long-term philosophical question

Two approaches were considered: establish a minimum set of ethical boundaries acceptable across traditions, or investigate whether universal human conduct can be derived from a universally verifiable understanding of reality. The recommendation was the second as a long-term research direction, while permitting shared commitments to emerge in the meantime. This was not independently ratified as an additional philosophical hypothesis. It remains an open question:

Is there a way of living that is universally appropriate for human beings, not because it has been prescribed by religion, culture, law or authority, but because it is consistent with the nature of reality itself?

If such an understanding is possible, what people will do and will not do could ultimately emerge from that understanding. However, the relationship between descriptive understanding of reality and normative conclusions about conduct must itself be examined. No claim about what ought to be done follows automatically from a description of what exists. Contributors may propose and challenge the grounds that connect them. The initiative must be willing to examine findings that do not support its initial expectations.

Proposed lifecycle of a commitment

The following operational sequence is an editorial working design to make the fourth-list decisions (founding decisions 70–78) implementable; it is not an adopted standard.

1. Formulate a candidate conduct proposition, identify the domain and explain why it matters.
2. Define the relevant terms, scope, conditions, affected parties and foreseeable difficult cases.
3. Invite independent responses and grounds, then examine objections using the existing dialogue methodology.
4. Record any scoped agreement separately from unresolved differences or questions. Preserve the distinct philosophical grounds.
5. Invite voluntary, version-specific undertakings by individuals or by communities within their own responsibilities. No philosophical allegiance or mandatory signature is required for participation.
6. Develop appropriate pathways to examine implementation, including the conditions and limits of any observations. Collect only evidence that is necessary and obtained with appropriate consent.
7. Review the record over time, including supporting and contrary observations, changes in understanding, partial fulfilment, withdrawal and revisions. A new version requires a new undertaking rather than automatically inheriting old signatures.

This lifecycle links List Four with Lists One, Two and Three and with the broader architecture of education and living demonstration. It does not create a global tribunal to enforce commitments. The protocol may establish standards for record quality while communities remain responsible for their own activities and applicable obligations. Disagreements about a commitment's meaning, justification or implementation are opportunities for continued inquiry.

Proposed safeguards for examining conduct

The initiative should avoid equating declarations with achievements, or evidence of limited conduct with a verdict on a person's entire life. A living demonstration may require sustained observation, contextual explanation and opportunities for independent examination. The interests and consent of affected people matter, particularly in family relationships, education, employment and other settings where power is unequal. Private experiences should not be published or replicated merely because they are relevant to a research question. Evidence should be described with its provenance and limitations, and a person should be able to correct or challenge a record. The means of protecting privacy, preventing harm and permitting withdrawal in a federated system remain open design questions.

5 Education and human living

Universal accessibility

Founding commitment. The Fourth List should not merely investigate whether universal understanding is possible. It should progressively make that understanding accessible to every human being.

Permanent responsibility proposed	Purpose
Investigation	Advance human understanding of reality.
Verification	Develop pathways for independent examination.
Documentation	Preserve cumulative records of inquiry and understanding.
Education	Enable humans to independently arrive at understanding rather than merely receive conclusions.
Accessibility	Remove linguistic, economic, geographical and educational barriers.

The educational responsibility follows from the distinction between individual understanding and collective inquiry. An explanation or a translated statement may help a person examine a claim, but neither establishes that the person understands it. Educational pathways should include the grounds, relevant observations, prerequisites, independent examinations and limitations. They should be available in accessible formats, at different levels of complexity, across languages and without requiring adherence to a philosophical doctrine. AI may facilitate personalized inquiry but must not replace the learner's own understanding.

Open public access to knowledge, open educational resources, translations and intergenerational transmission are part of the proposed design. Understanding and its shared pathways should not become proprietary resources whose accessibility is determined by ability to pay. Independent educators

and communities should be able to adapt educational methods to local needs and contribute improvements. Whether a pathway is actually accessible must itself be examined, not inferred from publishing it online.

Institutional models

Model	Responsibility
Research institution	Investigate, verify and publish understanding.
Research and education institution	Additionally develop pathways through which others can independently arrive at understanding.
Research, education and demonstration institution	Additionally facilitate and examine the implications of understanding in living.

The third model was recommended and the principle of demonstration through living was explicitly accepted. This does not mean a centralized institution prescribes how others must live. It means claims concerning human living remain open to examination in the domain to which they apply. Investigation, verification, education and living can inform one another continuously. Observations arising through lived demonstration may support, qualify or challenge philosophical claims and lead to further inquiry.

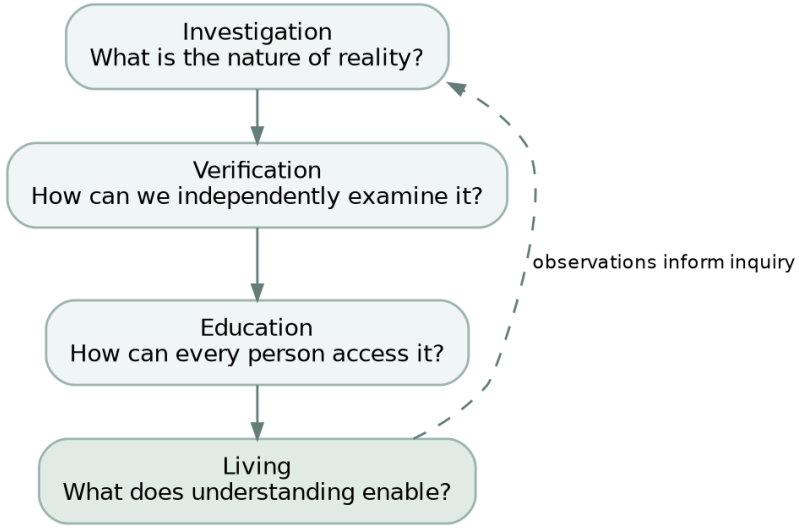

Figure 4: ***Figure 4. Investigation, verification, education and living.*** *Investigation, verification, education and living form a continuing cycle. Observations from living inform renewed inquiry.*

Demonstration through living

Founding commitment. Where an understanding makes claims about human living, its examination remains incomplete until its implications have also been examined through living.

Domain	Illustrative area of examination
Individual human living	Whether claimed implications for understanding, happiness and behaviour are observable over time.
Family and relationships	Whether claims concerning trust, respect and harmonious relationships can be independently examined in everyday living.
Education	Whether educational pathways actually facilitate understanding rather than memorization or adherence.
Production and exchange	How claims about needs, prosperity and economic relationships bear on actual activities.
Society and governance	How propositions about coexistence and institutional relationships apply in lived social arrangements.
Humanity and nature	How understanding of our relationship with nature bears on real ecological interactions.
Science and technology	How understanding guides the development and use of technical capabilities, including AI.

These illustrations extend the seven original domains without prescribing specific outcomes. Demonstrations should be voluntary, context-sensitive and open to evidence contrary to the original claim. They may require years of sustained observation, not just a single successful encounter. Methods for distinguishing causation from correlation, examining longitudinal findings, protecting participants and reporting contradictory observations are open design questions. Families, communities or individuals must not be pressured to expose private relationships or adopt a predetermined lifestyle. The initiative is not a political, religious or ideological movement. It facilitates examination rather than enforcing conduct.

Part Two: The Foundational Charter

6 The Foundational Charter

Founding draft for collective examination | 24 November 2026

This Charter proposes the enduring purpose, commitments and freedoms of The Fourth List. It is offered for open examination and has not been adopted by a global community.

Article I. Identity

The Fourth List, A World Assembly for Human Understanding, is an open global endeavour, undertaken by individuals and independent communities, both online and offline.

Its identity arises from its foundational purpose and open protocol, not from a particular legal entity, website, membership, governing body, founder or philosophical tradition. Organizations may support the endeavour but do not own it.

Article II. Permanent purpose

To investigate whether a universally verifiable understanding of reality is possible, make that understanding accessible to every human being, and examine how humanity can live in accordance with it.

The endeavour shall facilitate independent and collective inquiry, verification, cumulative documentation, education and the examination of understanding through living. Agreement is a possible outcome of inquiry, not a substitute for understanding or its ultimate objective.

Article III. Scope of inquiry

The scope of inquiry is reality in its entirety, including existence, consciousness, human beings, knowledge, human purpose, relationships, society and nature. No domain is excluded in advance merely because it is difficult to investigate or because existing traditions disagree about it.

Inquiry shall remain open to findings contrary to the expectations of the founders. The possibility of a common, independently verifiable reality and the hypothesis that every genuine contradiction can ultimately be resolved through sufficient understanding remain examinable hypotheses, not conditions of belief.

Article IV. Individual understanding

Understanding is an individual human achievement. Inquiry can be a collective endeavour. No individual, community, institution or technological system can understand or verify on behalf of another human being.

Philosophical participation shall take place in an individual capacity, irrespective of institutional affiliation. A person is free to examine and revise their own understanding. Institutional endorsement, academic status, authority and popularity do not establish truth.

Article V. Freedom of inquiry

Every human being shall be eligible to contribute to inquiry. No philosophical tradition, religious belief, cultural identity or institutional membership shall be a prerequisite for examining reality. All propositions, including those advanced by the founders, may be questioned.

Contributors shall be free to initiate inquiries independently. The collective research agenda shall emerge from independent contributions, interconnected questions and collective examination, rather than centrally assigned priorities.

Freedom to contribute does not establish that a contribution is verified. Communities may administer transparent standards of documentation, participation and conduct without claiming authority over truth.

Article VI. Independent verification

Claims about reality shall remain open to independent examination. The grounds of claims, their meanings, relevant conditions and pathways to verification should be made available for examination. Methods shall be appropriate to the claims and themselves remain examinable.

Belief, uncertainty, agreement, understanding and verification shall not be conflated. An agreement records the positions of its identified participants, not a universal verdict. Substantive objections and contrary findings shall remain examinable. No institution may establish truth by voting, declaration or authority alone.

The endeavour shall preserve the evolution of inquiry and the grounds of revisions so that future contributors can build upon earlier work.

Article VII. Universal accessibility

The Fourth List shall not merely investigate whether universal understanding is possible. It shall progressively make that understanding accessible to every human being.

Shared philosophical records, educational resources and verification pathways shall be openly accessible. Linguistic, educational, economic and geographical barriers shall be progressively addressed. Education shall facilitate independent understanding rather than require acceptance of conclusions.

Openness shall respect consent, privacy, attribution and the rights of individuals. Accessibility is a continuing responsibility, not a claim that every person already has equal access.

Article VIII. Understanding and human conduct

Where an understanding makes claims about human living, its examination remains incomplete until its implications have also been examined through living. Demonstration shall be facilitated voluntarily, with appropriate consent and respect for privacy, rather than prescribed by an institution.

The Fourth List shall maintain four distinct, interconnected records: agreement (what we agree on); disagreement (what we do not agree on); inquiry (what we need to understand together); and commitment (what we will do and what we will not do).

The fourth record shall enable shared responsibility and restraint without requiring identical philosophical foundations. Agreement, voluntary undertaking and evidence of conduct shall be distinguishable. Neither signing nor refusing a commitment establishes a person's understanding or worth. No candidate commitment shall be imposed as a condition of philosophical participation.

Article IX. Institutional independence

No founder, philosophical tradition, government, institution, funder or commercial interest shall have privileged authority over philosophical conclusions. Administrative and methodological authority shall be distinguished from authority over truth.

The endeavour shall maintain transparency of its methods and institutional decisions, subject to legitimate privacy protections. Its governance, operations and resource arrangements shall remain open to examination. AI may facilitate inquiry and accessibility but shall not substitute for independent human understanding or verification.

Article X. Decentralization and federation

The Fourth List shall develop an open protocol, open-source platforms implementing that protocol and a federated global knowledge network.

Independent communities may maintain their own records and infrastructure while collectively advancing a shared architecture of understanding. Online and offline inquiry shall complement one another.

Independent individuals, communities and organizations shall sustain their own activities and may voluntarily support shared needs. Financial contributions shall not confer philosophical authority, and participation in the global inquiry shall not require mandatory financial contributions.

Article XI. Freedom to contribute, fork and reconnect

Individuals and communities shall be free to initiate projects, propose improvements, independently implement and adapt the openly licensed software, methodology, governance framework, educational resources and assembly formats. This freedom extends to the entire institutional architecture, not merely software.

Independent implementations shall be able to share improvements, cooperate through compatible standards and reconnect without compulsory organizational integration. Reuse shall respect applicable licenses, consent, privacy and attribution; no implementation may falsely claim to represent another.

No organization shall retain exclusive authority over the future of the endeavour.

Article XII. Permanence and continuity

The permanent purpose of The Fourth List shall be protected, while its philosophical hypotheses remain open to examination and its methods, governance and institutional arrangements remain open to improvement.

The endeavour shall be developed openly from its beginning. Its own foundations, decisions and proposed revisions shall be publicly examinable. Continuity across generations shall arise from people voluntarily carrying its purpose forward rather than dependence on the founders or the survival of a particular organization.

The exact mechanisms for adoption, amendment, interpretation and compatibility shall be established through open founding. No such mechanism may convert the purpose of inquiry into a requirement to accept its anticipated conclusions.

Drafting notes

These notes accompany the draft Charter. They are not part of it.

Status and interpretation. This is a proposed charter, not an adopted constitution, legal instrument, or declaration of universal agreement. The articles articulate accepted founding directions alongside proposed constitutional safeguards drawn from the Founding Proposal. Their exact wording and protection mechanisms remain open to collective examination.

What is not being ratified. The two research hypotheses in Article III remain hypotheses. The twelve candidate restraints, the proposed Declaration of Human Commitments, the question of deriving universally appropriate conduct from reality, and precise criteria for List Four inclusion and demonstration remain open. No particular verification method, license, software standard, legal entity, decision threshold or financial obligation is adopted by this draft.

Part Three: The Architecture

7 Knowledge architecture

Fundamental units of the network

The shared architecture of understanding should be built from identifiable, interconnected records rather than undifferentiated articles, posts or conversation threads. The following ten units are proposed. All four lists may become dynamically generated views over interconnected records, rather than separate stores that risk becoming inconsistent with each other. List Four introduces additional proposed record types, described below.

Unit	Meaning and contribution to inquiry
Question	Something identified as requiring understanding. Can be linked to existing attempts, dependencies and unresolved obstacles.
Concept	A precisely articulated meaning, including relevant context and alternative definitions.
Proposition	A claim about reality that can be expressed, examined and challenged.
Reasoning	Grounds and logical relationships supporting or challenging a proposition.
Observation	Something observed in reality or reported in human experience, with the conditions and interpretation recorded.
Verification pathway	A method through which another person can independently examine a proposition.
Verification record	A documented instance of independent examination, including method, conditions and findings.
Objection	A substantive challenge to a proposition, reasoning, observation or method.
Philosophical system	An interconnected architecture of concepts, propositions and grounds for their examination.
Living demonstration	A documented examination of understanding through human living.

This is a conceptual architecture, not a final data schema. Relationships may include supports, contradicts, depends on, clarifies, translates, tests and revises. A dependency is itself an examinable claim. Definitions and translations must preserve context rather than silently equating terms. Proposed record fields include stable identifiers, version, authorship or attribution, date, provenance, scope and links to related arguments, objections and evidence. The protocol working group must establish exchange formats, record types, versioning and validation rules through independently tested implementations.

Proposed additional record types for List Four

These are implementation proposals arising from the new fourth list, not an approved schema or new philosophical conclusions.

Additional unit	Meaning and relationship to existing units
Conduct proposition	An examinable claim about what is appropriate for human beings to do or refrain from doing; linked to concepts, reasoning, objections and questions.
Commitment definition	A precise versioned statement of a responsibility or restraint, with its scope, conditions and intended implications.
Voluntary undertaking	A particular individual's or community's explicit commitment to a defined version, with grounds, date, scope and consent. An organizational undertaking is not a substitute for individual philosophical assent.
Implementation or demonstration record	A documented observation or examination of conduct in relation to an undertaking, linked to existing living demonstrations and relevant contrary observations.
Review or revision	A record of changes in grounds, undertaking, scope, withdrawal or implementation findings; it does not overwrite past versions.

A commitment is not a new type of truth claim simply because it is signed. The network must retain distinct relationships: agrees with, undertakes, refrains from, examines implementation of, challenges, revises and withdraws. It must distinguish a candidate commitment from an actual undertaking and distinguish self-report from independently examined demonstration. These links should preserve the provenance of each claim and the conditions under which evidence was obtained.

Federated implementations should be able to exchange commitment definitions and consented records without synchronizing private evidence. The public record can show the status and grounds where authorized while maintaining protected evidence locally where appropriate. How to represent withdrawal, sensitive observations, conflicting demonstrations and the extent of agreement remains open.

Version history and the evolution of understanding

Every philosophical contribution should have a traceable history. The record should enable a person to examine what a contributor originally understood, how they articulated it, which objections they encountered, what they subsequently understood differently, why their understanding changed and what remains unresolved. Changes supported by sufficient grounds should be recognized as progress, not inconsistency. This enables the network to preserve knowledge of the process through which understanding develops as well as the resulting claims.

Version history should retain the exact proposition that a person signed or examined. A later edit must not silently change the meaning of a prior signature. Independent records may coexist even when conclusions conflict. The network should help discover related or equivalent work without conflating distinct claims. Corrections, withdrawals, personal data, anonymization and the consequences of replication require careful design: openness and traceability are not requirements to publish private lives or keep sensitive records permanently public.

A common resource without a universal editor

A shared knowledge graph is a means of discovering relationships across distributed records. It need not be a single globally authoritative database. Independently maintained indexes and repositories can represent differing interpretations and provenance. A common schema may allow people to find several examinations of one proposition without granting any indexing service the power to declare one true. How such records are linked,

searched, synchronized and presented across forks remains part of the technical research agenda.

8 The open protocol

This chapter sets out why an open protocol is needed and what it must achieve. The proposed specification itself is Appendix A: Open Protocol.

Open platform and open protocol

Founding commitment. Develop an open protocol for collective philosophical inquiry, an open-source platform implementing that protocol, and a global community advancing both.

An open platform permits people to use and contribute to shared infrastructure. An open protocol enables anyone to create their own infrastructure, organize independently and collaborate through shared standards. A shared website alone would leave the initiative dependent on its operator. A protocol without usable implementations may be difficult for people to adopt. Both are needed. The protocol includes human procedures as well as machine-readable specifications. It must be implementable without dependence on any particular website, software, organization, technology provider or founder.

Wikipedia illustrates how a shared platform can coexist with a decentralized movement. The internet illustrates how independently operated systems can communicate through common protocols. These are analogies, not claims that either provides a complete model for philosophical inquiry. The Fourth List must remain capable of continuing if the initial website or supporting organization ceases to exist. It should belong to humanity in the sense of being freely implementable and collectively advanceable, not merely be available to humanity as a service.

Eight protocol layers

Layer	Problem to address
01. Representation	How questions, concepts, propositions, reasoning and complete philosophical systems are articulated and related.
02. Semantics	How words, definitions, concepts and contextual meanings are communicated across languages and traditions.
03. Dialogue	How independent participants examine different understandings together using repeatable procedures.
04. Verification	How independent examination, its methods, conditions, observations, limits and findings are documented.
05. Documentation	How agreements, disagreements, unresolved questions, voluntary commitments, provenance and revisions are represented.
06. Education	How pathways to understanding are developed, communicated and shared.
07. Demonstration	How claims concerning human living and the implementation of voluntary commitments are examined in practice.
08. Governance	How proposals, objections, tests and revisions to the protocol itself are undertaken and documented.

Each layer should be independently implementable and collectively interoperable. For example, an offline dialogue method must not require use of a specific AI tool. An independently designed educational resource should be able to link to verification records from other implementations. The boundaries and dependencies between the eight layers are themselves a proposed design for examination.

List Four across the existing eight layers

There is no need to discard the established eight-layer design or to create a ninth layer before examining the need. Representation describes a conduct proposition and its commitment version; semantics clarifies terms and scope; dialogue examines competing grounds and difficult cases; verification tests the claims that support a commitment; documentation preserves individual assent, undertaking and evidence separately; education makes the grounds and pathways accessible; demonstration examines conduct over time; governance protects consent, independence and review of the protocol itself. A compatible implementation should support these distinctions while retaining the freedom to implement alternative methods.

Seven fundamental properties

Property	Requirement
Open	Anyone can access the specifications, implement them and propose improvements.
Permissionless	Anyone can initiate an inquiry without central approval.
Interoperable	Independent implementations can exchange and interpret philosophical records.
Traceable	The origin, grounds and evolution of contributions can be examined.
Forkable	Communities can independently develop alternative methods and implementations.
Non-proprietary	No organization can claim exclusive ownership over shared human understanding or the common protocol.
Durable	Records and methods can survive technological and institutional change.

Permissionless participation does not mean a submission automatically receives a verified label or appears in every repository. Transparent procedural and moderation standards can govern an implementation while preserving independent implementation rights. Exchange formats, identity, signatures, licensing, preservation and synchronization must be developed through open proposals and testing. The reference platform should implement the protocol rather than define it through undocumented software behavior.

What exactly is open?

Open-source code is necessary but not sufficient. The following nine domains were proposed for openness, with licensing and implementation details to be settled through the founding process.

Component	Proposed accessibility
Software	Source code available under an appropriate open-source license.
Knowledge	Philosophical records openly licensed, with provenance, attribution and consent respected.
Methodology	Publicly available and independently implementable.
Governance	Public proposals, decisions, reasoning and unresolved objections.

Component	Proposed accessibility
Financial records	Transparent income, expenditure and commitments for the relevant activities.
Educational resources	Freely accessible and adaptable.
Assembly formats	Anyone can independently organize an assembly using the methods.
Research	Open participation, examination and contribution.
Institutional development	Anyone can propose and independently test improvements to the architecture.

Personal information, private dialogues and sensitive living records require consent, appropriate protections and context-specific access. Financial transparency likewise does not justify publishing unnecessary personal information. Specific licenses, attribution and privacy arrangements are not settled in this proposal.

Open-source inquiry analogy

Open-source software mechanism	Philosophical inquiry equivalent
Repository	Repository of human understanding and its grounds
Issue	Unresolved philosophical question
Bug report	Identified contradiction or substantive challenge
Pull request	Proposed improvement to an explanation or method
Code review	Philosophical examination
Testing	Independent verification
Documentation	Pathways to understanding and records of inquiry
Maintainer	Person carrying responsibility for maintaining an inquiry or its infrastructure
Fork	Alternative methodology or philosophical architecture
Release	Versioned record of the state of understanding
Contributor history	Traceable history of intellectual and practical contributions

The analogy has a fundamental limit. A software maintainer can decide which code becomes part of a project. A philosophical maintainer can administer the standards for documenting a contribution but cannot decide what is true for another human being. A merged proposal or protocol release must not be presented as a philosophical verdict.

9 Federated digital infrastructure and AI

The proposed technical design is Appendix C: Platform Architecture.

Global network

Individuals, universities, research groups, local communities, living communities and independent digital platforms should be able to work through common standards without being controlled by a central institution. A university in Japan, a family community in India, a research group in Germany and an independent philosopher in Brazil may conduct independent inquiries with different tools and still contribute to a shared body of records. Supporting organizations can facilitate these activities without representing or owning the philosophical understanding of the participants.

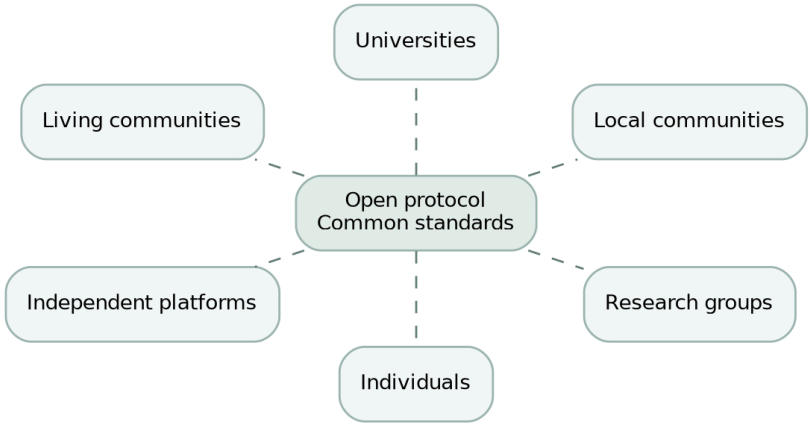

Figure 5: ***Figure 5. Independent communities connected through common standards.*** *Universities, local communities, research groups, individuals, independent platforms and living communities are connected by the open protocol, not controlled by a central organization.*

Architectural alternatives

Model	Advantage and limitation
A. Centralized repository	One global repository simplifies common indexing and coherent record keeping, but concentrates institutional power and creates a single dependency.
B. Fully decentralized repositories	Independent communities maximize local autonomy, but incompatible records can fragment inquiry and duplicate work.
C. Federated knowledge network	Independent repositories use common standards to exchange, discover and connect records, preserving autonomy while supporting cumulative inquiry. Coordination and interoperability still require careful design.

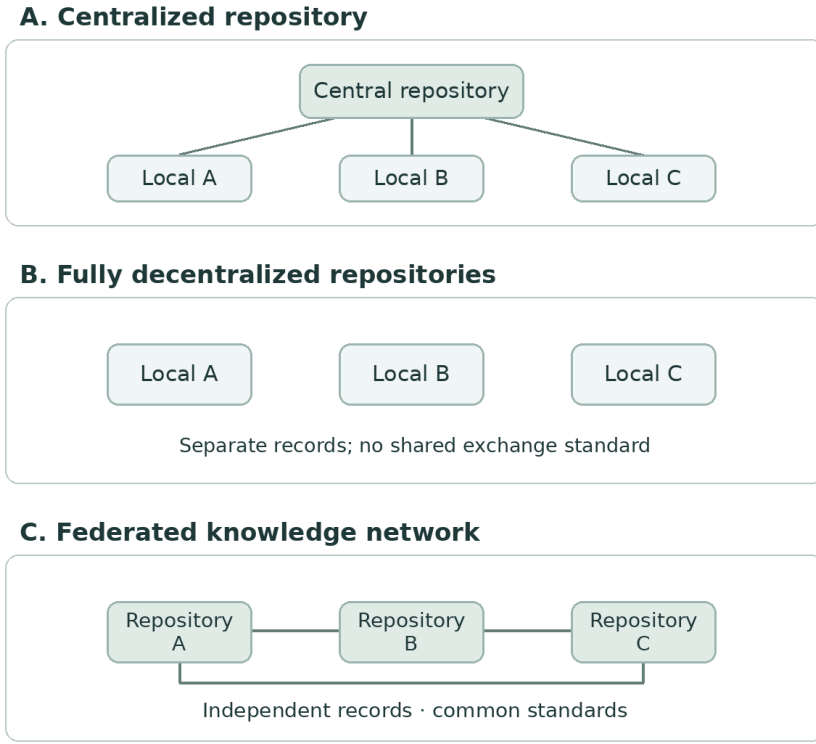

Figure 6: ***Figure 6. Three possible repository architectures.*** *Centralized: one store controls access. Decentralized: separate records may be disconnected. Federated: independent stores exchange records through shared standards.*

Federated global knowledge network

Founding commitment. Develop a federated global knowledge network, allowing independent communities to maintain their own records while collectively advancing a shared architecture of human understanding.

The shared knowledge graph is a common resource, not a central authority. Communities may use different methods, languages, technologies and philosophical positions. They may examine the same question and reach different conclusions. The network should help them discover each other's work, examine differences, identify common grounds and cooperate towards resolution without requiring uniformity. The infrastructure should enable convergence where understanding supports it, not enforce convergence as a condition of membership. Over time the aim is an interconnected map of human understanding and the boundaries of what remains unresolved.

The design does not prescribe one global database or technical topology. The shared architecture could be implemented through independent repositories, multiple indexes and exchange services. Decisions on hosting, identity, record synchronization, trust, compatibility and federation remain open. The platform should not become an authority over philosophical truth through control of search, rankings, labels or visibility.

Online and offline as complementary environments

Online open-source platform	Offline open-source platform
Global question repository	Local inquiry groups
Repository of philosophical systems	Philosophical study circles
Collaborative examination of propositions	In-person philosophical dialogues
Documentation of independent verification	Practical demonstrations through living

Online open-source platform	Offline open-source platform
Collaborative translation	Local educational initiatives
AI-assisted inquiry	Regional and world assemblies
Public history of evolving understanding	Independent research communities

Neither environment is subordinate to the other. Online infrastructure provides continuity, discoverability and collective memory. Offline communities enable sustained human interaction, relationships, observation, independent study and lived verification. The shared protocol should work in both contexts. People need not obtain a platform account or central approval to undertake local inquiry.

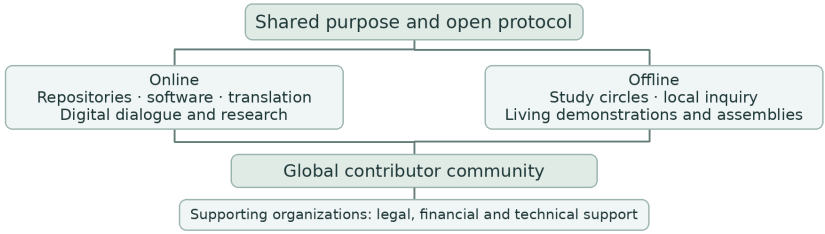

Figure 7: ***Figure 7. Online and offline infrastructure.*** *Common standards link online repositories and offline communities. Contributors participate independently. Supporting organizations provide resources without owning inquiry.*

The figure represents shared purpose and a common protocol linking independent activities, not a hierarchy of command. A supporting foundation, if established, would provide legal, financial and technical infrastructure to relevant activities. It would not own the inquiry.

The role of AI

Founding commitment. AI shall be an integral but non-authoritative layer of The Fourth List, with independent human understanding and verification remaining central to the entire endeavour.

AI can help manage the scale and complexity of collective inquiry. The following eight domains were proposed:

Domain	Possible role
Philosophical mapping	Identify relationships between questions, concepts and systems for human review.
Contradiction discovery	Surface potentially incompatible propositions and assumptions, distinguishing apparent from genuine contradictions.
Translation	Facilitate communication across languages and philosophical vocabularies; preserve contested meanings.
Collective memory	Retrieve previous inquiries, observations and objections so participants need not start again from scratch.
Dialogue	Assist participants in accurately understanding each other's positions without deciding which is true.
Education	Adapt explanations and pathways to a person's current comprehension and needs.
Verification	Assist in proposing methods of examination and identifying missing evidence or possible counterexamples.
Coordination	Connect independent contributors investigating related questions.

AI-generated interpretations, translations, proposed contradictions and conclusions must remain distinguishable from human-authored contributions and independent verification records. AI can misrepresent traditions, introduce bias, fabricate evidence or generate an apparent agreement that does not correspond to understanding. Such outputs require appropriate traceability and human examination. No AI provider, model or commercial organization should become indispensable to the protocol. Communities may use their own AI systems, or participate offline or without AI. Detailed evaluation, disclosure, consent and privacy standards remain to be developed.

AI and the fourth list

AI may help identify potentially related commitments, compare their wording, surface conflicts between a stated commitment and available evidence, translate records, and suggest questions or methods of examination. These are assistance functions, not determinations of whether a person has fulfilled a commitment. AI must not sign on behalf of a human being, generate fictitious endorsements, infer moral status from private communications, manufacture evidence of conduct or turn a commitment into an automated reputation score. Consent, human review, data mini-

mization and the separation of AI-generated suggestions from verification records are especially important here. These are proposed implementation safeguards, subject to examination.

10 Offline communities and independent initiatives

Practical guidance for starting and running a community is in Chapter 17: Community Handbook.

An open infrastructure, not an organization inviting participation

The initial institutional concept shifted when the initial proposer specified that The Fourth List should be an online open-source as well as an offline open-source platform. The objective is not a central organization conducting philosophical inquiry and inviting people to attend. It is open infrastructure through which people can conduct and carry forward inquiry independently. The initial organization primarily develops and maintains conditions, tools and methods that make this possible.

Anyone can start a local initiative

A person discovering The Fourth List in Japan, Brazil, Kenya or elsewhere should be able to access the methodology, invite others, organize a local assembly, investigate questions and contribute findings to the network without asking permission from a central organization. This is the operational meaning of an offline open-source platform.

The proposed community toolkit should contain:

- How to start a local inquiry community, including the shared purpose and commitments to inquiry.

- How to conduct a philosophical dialogue using independently recorded positions and mutual comprehension.
- How to document agreements and disagreements, including definitions, individual grounds and versions.
- How to undertake and record independent verification appropriate to a claim.
- How to organize a local or regional assembly as part of continuing inquiry.
- How to contribute findings to independent repositories and the federated network.
- How to propose improvements to methodology, documentation and the protocol itself.

The toolkit is a working design for the Community Handbook, not a central licensing scheme. Groups may meet physically, work online, or combine both. They should be able to retain their own records, use their own language, adapt the format and preserve connections to the broader endeavour through interoperable records. Practical details, safeguarding, moderation and verification standards should be tested with early communities.

Independent projects

Unlike many open-source projects that begin with a relatively well-defined technical problem, The Fourth List must also investigate which problems need to be addressed. Anyone should be free to initiate a project. Each project may define its own inquiry agenda, contributors, methods, documentation and operational requirements, and may collaborate, merge or conclude without central permission.

Illustrative project	Purpose
Understanding Consciousness	Examine different explanations of consciousness.
Understanding Human Happiness	Investigate whether lasting happiness is possible and under what conditions.

Illustrative project	Purpose
Dictionary of Human Understanding	Establish conceptual clarity across languages and traditions.
Mapping Philosophical Systems	Document and compare complete systems and their interdependencies.
Family and Human Relationships	Examine philosophical propositions through everyday living.
Universal Education	Develop accessible pathways to understanding and independent verification.
The Fourth List Protocol	Develop, test and improve common standards of inquiry.

These examples are not centrally assigned programmes or commitments to fund them. The emergent research agenda should make related work discoverable, show where collaborators are needed and encourage independent investigation rather than unnecessary duplication. Projects may also independently test different methods before proposing their adoption across the network.

Periodic assemblies and continuing inquiry

The proposed assembly model treats gatherings as milestones rather than the beginning and end of inquiry. Participants can prepare positions, examine questions together, record results and continue study after a gathering. A participant need not become a permanent member or commit indefinitely. The network should make it possible to continue responsibility for questions voluntarily undertaken.

Conventional participation	Proposed continuing contribution
Present a paper	Make an understanding independently examinable.
Attend a discussion	Seek to understand competing positions.
Present an objection	Help investigate the objection where possible.
Identify an unresolved question	Contribute towards its resolution where able.
Attend an annual gathering	Preserve continuity of inquiry between gatherings.

Regional and world assemblies are opportunities to review, advance and demonstrate progress across independent communities. They should not be the sole route for contribution, verification or recognition. The open-

source platform direction was accepted; the exact assembly format, continuing participation expectations, selection, cadence and financial arrangements remain proposals for testing.

Local examination of commitments

Local communities may examine candidate commitments, clarify their definitions, document distinct grounds, invite voluntary undertakings and, where appropriate, study their implementation through living. A community can share a commitment definition and its consented findings with other communities while preserving its own context. It need not wait for global agreement or seek central authorization. The community handbook should explain how to facilitate these discussions without pressure to sign, how to record disagreement or non-participation, how to safeguard private observations and how to review a commitment when new understanding emerges. A local assembly's outcome must always identify the participants and scope rather than imply universal endorsement.

11 Participation and contribution

Functional responsibilities

Responsibility	Function
Presenting	Articulate an understanding of reality and the grounds and pathways by which it can be examined.
Examining	Independently examine claims, concepts, reasoning and verification methods.
Facilitating	Help participants understand each other and locate precise differences without dictating conclusions.
Documenting	Preserve propositions, arguments, observations, agreements, disagreements and changes in understanding.

These are functions, not permanent ranks. One person may perform several functions in one inquiry and different functions in another. Facilitating or documenting an inquiry confers no authority over its conclusions.

Public, participants, members and officeholders

Form of association	Responsibility
Public	Access, study, independently examine and challenge documented understanding.
Participants	Contribute questions, claims, reasoning, methods and independent verification.
Members	Carry ongoing responsibility for advancing the purpose within a participating organization or community.
Officeholders	Carry defined administrative, methodological or operational responsibilities.

These distinctions may be useful within independent organizations. They are not a global membership hierarchy or prerequisites for participation in the inquiry. A non-member may understand something more clearly

than all members. A contribution must be examinable on its merits. Specific membership and officeholding arrangements should be developed by communities in accordance with the shared purpose and freedoms.

Global representation

The network should actively facilitate participation across regions, languages, philosophical and intellectual traditions, academic and independent researchers, scientific and interdisciplinary communities, and people attempting to demonstrate understanding through living. It should examine barriers that prevent meaningful participation. Representation must not become a means of distributing authority over truth according to population, geography, university prestige or the age of a tradition. Broad participation can reveal assumptions and expand the scope of inquiry without turning the inquiry into a representative vote.

Individual participation

Founding commitment. Individual understanding, rather than institutional representation, shall be the basis of participation in The Fourth List.

Institutional representation	Individual participation
A person represents a university, country or tradition.	A person participates on the grounds of their own understanding.
A person may be expected to defend an established position.	A person remains free to revise their position.
Agreement may require institutional approval.	Agreement arises from the individual's own examination.
Representation is delegated.	Understanding cannot be delegated.

Institutions may nominate, fund or facilitate participation, but cannot determine what a person understands, accepts or verifies. A Buddhist philosopher should be free to question Buddhism, a scientist to question materialism, and a Madhyasth Darshan practitioner to question Madhyasth Darshan. Governments, universities and philosophical institutions may be supporting partners. Philosophical signatures remain those of individual

human beings. No participant carries a responsibility to defend a philosophy; every participant carries responsibility for examining reality.

Qualification for participation

The recommended distinction is between universal eligibility to contribute and selection for a specific activity or assembly when preparation or capacity requires it. Academic or other credentials may inform selection, but must not be mandatory prerequisites for contribution.

Possible criterion	Limitation
Academic qualifications	Evidence of education, not necessarily understanding.
Published philosophical work	Evidence of intellectual contribution, not necessarily verification.
Peer recognition	May reproduce existing intellectual hierarchies.
Years of study	Duration alone does not establish understanding.
Demonstration through living	May require sustained observation and must respect privacy.
Willingness and ability to inquire	Requires transparent, fair assessment and accessible opportunities.

The detailed selection policy remains undecided. Everyone should be eligible to contribute, while activities with limited capacity may require transparent criteria related to the inquiry. Selection must not imply superior human status or authority over truth.

Proposed selection capacities

A participant in a prepared assembly should be able to articulate their understanding clearly, explain its grounds, comprehend alternative positions, distinguish knowledge, belief and uncertainty, examine their own assumptions, and engage in sustained inquiry without defending a predetermined conclusion. Credentials, publications and experience may offer contextual evidence but are not proof. Appropriate translations, formats, educational support and practical access arrangements should allow people to demonstrate capacity in different ways. These capacities were proposed during the founding discussion; their assessment and application remain open.

Contributions beyond philosophy

Contributor	Possible contribution
Philosopher	Articulate and examine understanding and verification pathways.
Software engineer	Develop the open-source platform and protocol implementations.
Linguist	Examine conceptual equivalence across languages.
Educator	Develop and test pathways to understanding.
Scientist	Design and undertake appropriate verification experiments.
Family	Voluntarily examine propositions through everyday living.
Designer	Make complex understanding accessible and usable.
Community organizer	Facilitate independent local inquiry communities.
Historian	Document the development of philosophical understanding.
Student	Ask questions, identify gaps and independently examine claims.

Everyone may contribute according to their interests, capacities and understanding. An infrastructure contribution is not lesser merely because it is not a philosophical assertion. The network should make it possible to discover useful work and collaborate without requiring all contributors to participate in every dimension of the endeavour.

Proposed permanent open working groups

The following are proposed functional areas, not mandatory centrally managed departments. Contributors may organize independently around them and initiate additional groups as needs emerge.

Working group	Responsibility
Philosophy	Foundational questions, concepts and philosophical systems.
Methodology	Dialogue, examination and verification.
Technology	Open-source digital infrastructure and interoperability.
Education	Pathways to understanding and educational resources.
Languages	Translation and conceptual equivalence.
Living	Demonstration and examination through human living.
Communities	Development of independent local inquiry groups.
Assemblies	Regional and world gatherings.
Governance	Institutional architecture, safeguards and protocol governance.

Working group	Responsibility
Resources	Distributed financial sustainability and infrastructure.

The form, responsibilities, membership and decision-making practices of working groups should evolve openly. They may coordinate across communities but should not establish centralized authority over research priorities or truth.

12 Governance and institutional architecture

The proposed operational model is Appendix B: Governance Framework.

Institutional independence

The endeavour may originate with a person, organization or philosophical tradition. Its credibility depends on its capacity to examine even its founders' understanding. Six safeguards were proposed:

Safeguard	Institutional implication
Philosophical independence	No tradition receives privileged status or immunity from examination.
Financial independence	Financial contributions cannot purchase influence over philosophical conclusions.
Intellectual independence	Every participant remains free to challenge any proposition.
Procedural transparency	Methods, proposals, decisions and their grounds remain publicly examinable, subject to appropriate privacy protections.
Institutional accountability	The institution itself, including its governance and methodology, remains open to examination.
Intergenerational continuity	Purpose and participation do not depend on the continued presence of founders.

Separate administration, methodology and inquiry

Function	Authority and limits
Administration	Manage resources, infrastructure, gatherings and operations. Administrative authority does not confer authority over philosophical truth.
Methodology	Develop and maintain procedural standards for inquiry, documentation, exchange and verification. May administer those standards, not decide what another person understands.

Function	Authority and limits
Inquiry	Undertake independent and collective examination of reality and document the grounds and findings.

Philosophical understanding does not automatically qualify someone to manage resources, and administrative competence does not imply philosophical understanding. The separation should be reflected in the governance of supporting organizations and communities. Specific bodies, roles and accountability arrangements are to be developed openly.

Authority and the fourth list

Administration, methodology and inquiry remain distinct when dealing with commitments. A maintainer may determine whether a record meets a stated documentation standard, but cannot decide what another person understands or compel another person to undertake a commitment. Participation in the network must not depend on accepting every candidate in List Four. The freedom to examine and challenge conduct propositions, to decline a voluntary undertaking and to revise one's position is part of the independence of inquiry. Communities remain responsible for their own activities; the initiative does not acquire authority over human conduct simply by publishing a declaration.

Permanence of purpose

Founding commitment. The Fourth List will have a permanently protected purpose, foundational hypotheses open to examination and continuously evolving methods and institutional structures.

Proposed protected commitment	Means open to evolution
Investigation of universally verifiable understanding	Methods of investigation
Accessibility of understanding to every human being	Educational methods and formats
Independent verification	Standards of verification
Freedom of philosophical inquiry	Participation mechanisms
Examination of claims about living through living	Methods of demonstration

Proposed protected commitment	Means open to evolution
Institutional independence	Governance and organizational structure

The two foundational hypotheses, including the resolvability hypothesis, must remain examinable. Protecting the purpose of inquiry must never mean protecting its anticipated conclusions. This is an aspiration for continuity across centuries, not a claim that any legal structure can guarantee it. The proposed charter itself must be examined during open founding before adoption. How amendments, reinterpretations, divergent forks and contrary findings affect the protected purpose remains to be resolved.

Governance of the protocol

Governance model	Primary risk
Founder-led	Dependence on individuals and concentration of final authority.
Democratic	Popularity or voting power may override sound reasoning.
Contribution-based	Responsibility can concentrate among established contributors and exclude newcomers.
Federated	Coordination may be slow and independent communities may fragment.

The recommended working design combines contribution-based responsibility and federated coordination. This is a governance proposal for protocol evolution, not a voting method for establishing truth. The network should distinguish a practical decision to adopt a standard from a philosophical conclusion independently verified by participants.

Proposed governance through documented resolution

1. Anyone can submit a protocol proposal.
2. Document the problem, proposed solution, grounds and relevant alternatives.
3. Contributors independently examine the proposal and its implications.
4. Record and investigate substantive objections.

5. Enable alternative implementations and independent testing where possible.
6. Publish decisions, their scope and grounds for adoption.
7. Preserve remaining objections after adoption so future contributors can re-examine the decision.

Operational decisions may need deadlines, delegated responsibilities, procedures for deadlocks, reversibility or other practical mechanisms. Such procedures must be transparent and cannot be equated with establishing philosophical truth. Exact decision thresholds, appeal mechanisms, responsibility assignment and release management are not settled.

Freedom to fork

Founding commitment. The freedom to fork extends beyond software to the entire institutional architecture of The Fourth List.

Individuals and communities may independently reproduce, adapt and develop the openly licensed software, inquiry protocol, governance framework, educational resources, assembly methodology and philosophical records. They should not need permission from the founders or a supporting foundation to do so. No organization has exclusive authority over the future of the initiative. This protects against capture and permits experimentation even if the original organization ceases to operate or changes direction. The scope of reuse must respect applicable licenses, attribution, consent, personal data and safeguards against misleading claims of affiliation.

Freedom to reconnect

The proposed complement to forking is reconnection. Separation need not be permanent. The protocol should facilitate discovery of alternative implementations, examination of methodological differences, sharing improvements, collaboration without organizational integration, and reconciliation or reintegration when differences are resolved. Decentralization

should enable experimentation without making fragmentation inevitable. A fork that remains distinct can still exchange records through compatible interfaces. The details of reconciliation, compatibility and migration are part of the protocol design.

Independent identity

Approach	Basis and limitation
Organizational affiliation	Recognition by a central organization creates dependency on its approval.
Protocol compatibility	Common technical and methodological standards permit interoperability, but technical standards alone may not protect the purpose.
Foundational charter	A common purpose and commitments support identity, but adherence and interpretation require transparent examination.

The recommendation is to combine commitment to shared purpose with compatible protocols. A community should be able to participate through its conduct and implementation rather than a central grant of permission. A fork may diverge in its methods and still collaborate; it may also cease to share the original purpose. Rules for naming, compatibility declarations, trademarks or misleading affiliation remain open and should not suppress the freedom to fork.

Four levels of foundational documentation

Document	Contents and nature
Foundational Charter	Purpose, fundamental commitments and freedoms intended for permanent protection after collective examination and adoption.
Philosophical Research Agenda	Hypotheses and unresolved questions, always open to inquiry.
Open Protocol	Evolving standards of dialogue, examination, verification, documentation and interoperability.
Implementation Handbook	Practical guidance, freely adaptable by communities, platforms and assemblies.

Separating these levels prevents technical or administrative decisions from becoming unnecessarily permanent. It also prevents hypotheses being treated as doctrine. The seven foundational documents expand these

levels into more specific deliverables, including governance, platform architecture and community guidance; the philosophical research agenda is represented through the evolving question bank and related inquiry records.

Unity of purpose, not unity of organization

Founding commitment. The Fourth List shall be defined by its foundational purpose and open protocol rather than by any particular legal entity, website, membership or governing body.

Imagine a future with 10,000 independent local communities, 500 independent digital platforms, 100 variations of methodology, millions of contributors and numerous independently governed supporting foundations. These numbers were illustrative, not targets. What connects the endeavour is the shared purpose and the ability to cooperate through open standards, not common management or ownership. Many organizations, implementations, methods and philosophical positions can coexist. The endeavour continues through humans who voluntarily carry its purpose forward.

Five components

Component	Purpose
Charter	Establish the common purpose and fundamental commitments.
Protocol	Establish shared standards for collective inquiry.
Network	Connect independent individuals, communities and supporting organizations.
Platform	Provide open-source tools for contribution and collaboration.
Assembly	Enable periodic collective examination and advancement of understanding.

Each component should evolve independently of any one organization. The Fourth List is a global endeavour supported by organizations, not an organization seeking global participation. It incorporates aspects of a conference, research institution, philosophical society and digital network but is not reducible to any one of them.

Emergent collective research agenda

Founding commitment. The research agenda shall emerge organically through independent contributions, interconnected questions and collective examination, without a central authority assigning research priorities.

Model	Advantage and limitation
Centrally determined agenda	Coordinates effort but concentrates intellectual influence.
Entirely independent agendas	Maximizes freedom but may fragment effort and duplicate work.
Emergent collective agenda	Combines independent initiative with shared direction through visible interdependencies; requires good discovery and coordination mechanisms.

The network should make visible which questions remain unresolved, which depend on others, which are already being investigated and by whom, where cooperation may help and where contributions are needed. The prioritization criteria in Chapter 3 can assist this process. Contributors remain free to investigate any question. Collective direction should emerge from understanding what needs to be done rather than from an authority deciding what others must do.

K4M2A and possible supporting organizations

One possible arrangement is for K4M2A to initiate The Fourth List, provide resources, develop initial infrastructure and invite founding contributors. As independent participation grows, the initiative could become independently governed, with K4M2A remaining a contributor rather than retaining permanent control. This was a proposal, not an accepted legal or financial arrangement. The new name intentionally resonates with the four in K4M2A, as the initial proposer explained, but this does not change the decision that the initiative is defined by its purpose and open protocol rather than by a founding entity. The future role of K4M2A, any supporting foundation, intellectual property arrangements, resource commitments and terms of any transition remain open. No clause in this

proposal grants founders or a supporting institution exclusive authority over the endeavour.

13 Economic architecture

Proposed financial accountability and voluntary pooling are detailed in Governance Framework section 10.

Material resources and responsibility

Voluntary inquiry does not eliminate the need for material resources. Digital infrastructure, full-time technical work, translation and documentation, research and verification, educational infrastructure, physical meeting spaces and assemblies, and support for people who otherwise cannot participate all need to be sustained. The economic architecture must distinguish compensation for work from financial incentives for particular philosophical conclusions. The question is how resources can support the endeavour without acquiring authority over it.

Funding alternatives

Model	Source and principal limitation
Donation-based	Donations from individuals and institutions; financial uncertainty and potential donor influence.
Endowment-based	Income from permanently held assets; substantial initial capital and governance of those assets required.
Commercial ecosystem	Revenue from complementary products and services; possible conflict between commercial incentives and open inquiry.
Distributed support	Independent communities sustain their activities; unequal access to resources and potential underfunding of common infrastructure.

The initial recommendation was to allow all four models to coexist. The initial proposer subsequently selected distributed support as the preferred architecture. It is consistent with independent inquiry, federated infra-

structure, voluntary participation and the freedom to fork. Centralizing all resources would introduce a concentration of power that the intellectual and technical architecture is intended to avoid. Local communities may determine how they finance their own work, consistent with the common commitments. Distributed support does not require communities to reject donations, endowments or earned revenue in their own arrangements, but none is prescribed as a global funding model.

Distributed economic architecture

Accepted direction. Independent individuals, communities and organizations sustain their own activities and voluntarily contribute towards shared infrastructure and collective endeavours. The Fourth List should not require a central treasury or mandatory contribution to sustain participation in the global network.

Activity	Proposed economic responsibility
Local inquiry communities	Sustained by their respective communities.
Research projects	Sustained by their contributors and voluntary supporters.
Digital platforms	Sustained by their respective operators.
Regional assemblies	Sustained by participating communities.
World assemblies	Collectively supported by participating individuals and organizations.
Common protocol	Voluntary contributions of time, expertise and resources.
Educational resources	Developed and supported by independent contributors.

This allocation illustrates the principle of distributed responsibility. It does not constitute a budget, binding funding obligation or guarantee that shared needs will be met.

Economic principles

Principle	Implication
Economic autonomy	Each community determines how it sustains its activities.
Voluntary contribution	Participation in the global inquiry does not require mandatory financial contributions.

Principle	Implication
Financial accountability	Each community remains responsible for its financial commitments and transparent use of resources.
Mutual support	Communities may voluntarily support communities with fewer resources.
Independence of inquiry	Financial support does not confer philosophical or institutional authority over the endeavour.
Open knowledge	Financial arrangements preserve public accessibility of the shared body of understanding and verification pathways.

Four economic safeguards preceded this six-principle refinement: foundational knowledge and verification pathways remain free to access; financial contributions cannot confer philosophical authority; economic arrangements must not create incentives to manufacture disagreement or prolong unresolved inquiry; and fair compensation for actual work does not confer exclusive ownership over shared understanding. These safeguards are compatible with independent organizations developing services and products using the open protocol, provided the common knowledge infrastructure remains open and applicable licenses are respected. The nature and limits of these arrangements remain open to founding review.

The principal weakness of distributed support is the possibility that essential shared infrastructure remains underfunded and wealthier communities have disproportionately greater capacity to contribute. Voluntary pooling for defined shared needs, transparent commitments and mutual support can be tested without creating permanent centralized financial control. Possible shared needs include archiving, translation, interoperability tests, maintenance and support for less-resourced communities. The mechanisms for pooling, accountability, avoiding conflicts of interest and ensuring access remain undecided.

14 Motivation and measurement

Architecture of motivation

Conventional digital platforms often optimize engagement. Academic institutions may reward publications, citations, grants and professional recognition. The Fourth List needs to ensure its incentives serve inquiry rather than create reasons for disagreement, dependency or competition to continue.

Conventional incentive	Proposed direction
Publishing more	Advancing understanding
Defending one's position	Examining one's position
Accumulating followers	Making understanding accessible
Receiving citations	Enabling independent verification
Winning debates	Resolving contradictions
Demonstrating expertise	Helping others understand
Increasing engagement	Resolving questions
Institutional recognition	Meaningful contribution

The platform should not manufacture reasons to keep people engaged. A person arriving at understanding and no longer needing a tool may represent a successful outcome. This principle has implications for product design, resource allocation, contribution mechanisms and measures of success. It does not require ignoring usage data where it reveals accessibility or usability problems; usage is not itself the purpose.

Recognition without competitive ranking

Contribution histories can document meaningful contributions in the way open-source projects preserve provenance. They may record questions clar-

ified, contradictions identified, propositions examined, verification pathways developed, translations completed, educational resources created and communities facilitated. Recognition must not become a competitive ranking of human understanding. Volume of contributions is not a measure of how much a person understands. A single useful objection or carefully documented verification attempt may be more meaningful than numerous superficial contributions. The design of contribution histories, attribution, discovery and recognition should reflect this distinction.

Architecture of measurement

Conventional metric	Proposed indicator of progress
Number of registered users	People independently arriving at understanding, where this can be responsibly examined.
Number of publications	Questions meaningfully advanced.
Number of discussions	Contradictions clarified or resolved.
Time spent on the platform	Understanding made more accessible.
Number of assemblies	Progress arising from those assemblies.
Institutional growth	Growth of independently functioning communities.
Volume of knowledge	Quality and accessibility of verification pathways.
Number of agreements	Extent of independently verified understanding.

These indicators are proposed as diagnostic tools, not performance targets or a numerical ranking. Reported understanding and actual independent verification are not the same. Counting resolutions without establishing the criteria for resolution would distort the inquiry. The network should examine whether its activities have made inquiry clearer, more accessible, more cumulative and more independently verifiable. The pilot must help develop responsible measures and identify misleading proxies.

Measuring progress in List Four

The original diagnostic measures remain relevant. For the new list, proposed indicators include the clarity of commitment definitions, visibility of differing grounds, accessibility of voluntary participation, quality of implementation pathways, and responsible examination of actual conduct including counterexamples. A number of signatures, declarations or reported successes is not proof of universal agreement or fulfilment. The network should not reward performative pledges, punish honest revisions or turn records into competitive moral rankings. Evidence of unfulfilled or unworkable commitments can advance inquiry. These indicators are proposed for pilot testing rather than adopted numerical targets.

Part Four: Founding and Practice

15 The founding process

The Critical Review later proposes an even smaller first experiment.

Open from the beginning

Founding commitment. The development of The Fourth List shall itself be an open-source endeavour from the beginning. The first open-source project of The Fourth List will be The Fourth List itself.

Develop first, open later	Open from the beginning
Greater initial coherence	Greater collective ownership
Faster initial decision-making	Broader examination of assumptions
Founders establish the architecture	Contributors collectively develop the architecture
People join an established initiative	People participate in establishing the initiative

The second approach was explicitly chosen. The founding proposal must document decisions already made, their reasoning, alternatives and unresolved questions. It must be published as a proposal, not a finished constitution. The endeavour should demonstrate its own methodology through the process of its creation. This includes keeping its founders' proposals open to criticism, recording revisions and preserving reasons for change. The permanent purpose and charter proposed in this document are intended to be examined before adoption by communities.

Six founding outputs

Proposed founding output	Purpose
Foundational Charter v1.0	Document the permanent purpose and commitments after collective examination.
Open Protocol v0.1	Establish and test initial standards for collective inquiry.
Open-source Platform v0.1	Provide an initial digital implementation, not the exclusive implementation.
Community Handbook v0.1	Enable anyone to establish an independent offline community.
Foundational Question Bank	Begin an evolving, interconnected research agenda.
Founding Assembly	Examine and improve the preceding outputs in light of actual inquiries.

These are proposed operational outputs, distinct from the document development suite. The version numbers are illustrative and do not imply that a charter has been adopted or that software exists. The first assembly should be an opportunity to collectively develop the infrastructure, not simply announce it or debate philosophy. As a proposed extension, the founding assembly should also examine the fourth-list methodology, the candidate commitments and a draft commitment record. It need not adopt or sign a declaration.

Seven foundational documents

Document	Scope
01. Founding Proposal	Purpose, vision, philosophical foundations and institutional architecture.
02. Foundational Charter	Permanent purpose, commitments, rights and freedoms.
03. Open Protocol	Standards for inquiry, dialogue, verification, documentation and interoperability.
04. Governance Framework	Federation, institutional independence, distributed economics, freedom to fork and reconnect.
05. Platform Architecture	Open-source software, knowledge graph, federation and AI integration.
06. Community Handbook	Independent local communities, projects and assemblies.

Document	Scope
07. Foundational Question Bank	Initial questions, hypotheses, dependencies and emerging research directions.

Each document should be independently versioned, openly licensed and publicly examinable. The four levels of documentation in Chapter 12 are conceptual distinctions; these seven documents are a practical initial development suite. The charter, protocol and handbook may evolve on different timescales. The question bank is not a finalized central research agenda. No specific open license has yet been selected. As a working proposal, a living Declaration of Human Commitments and associated record specification could be maintained as an additional resource, initially within the protocol, question bank and community handbook or as a separately versioned document after examination. It is not an adopted eighth founding document.

What we are building

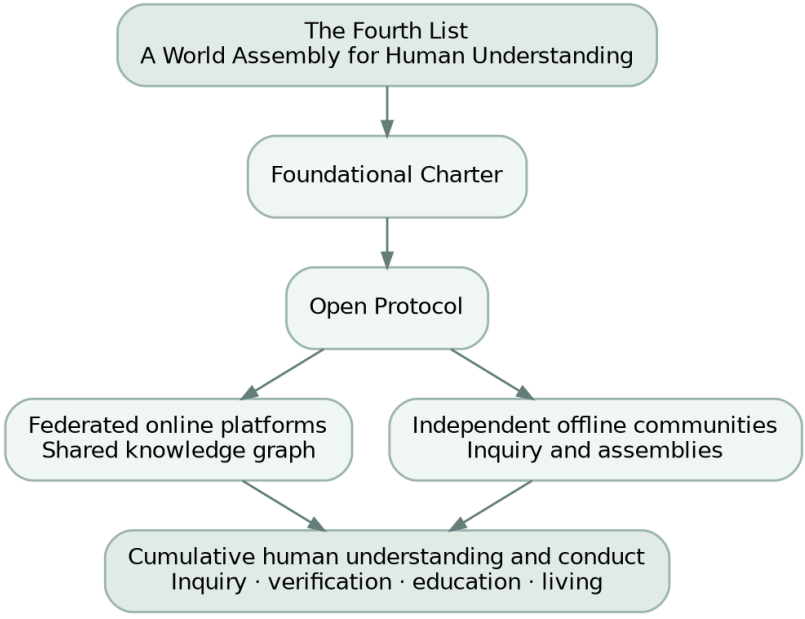

Figure 8: ***Figure 8. The five components of The Fourth List.*** *Purpose, charter and protocol connect federated online platforms and independent offline communities. Both contribute to cumulative human understanding and records of voluntary commitments.*

The architecture connects the purpose, charter, protocol, online platforms, offline communities and cumulative records of inquiry. The diagram is conceptual, not a hierarchical organization chart. Supporting organizations can contribute resources and maintain particular implementations without owning the charter, protocol or inquiry. A particular website, assembly or software implementation can cease while independent communities continue the endeavour.

A practical founding experiment

The original presentation proposed international collaboration, not immediate venue booking. Philosophical design, global participation, dialogue and documentation, organizing and resources must all be developed. The first invitation is to help determine whether the proposed architecture should exist and to build it together. A practical pilot can test whether the methodology yields greater clarity than conventional discussion.

Phase	Proposed scope and expected output
1. Founding inquiry	An illustrative 8 to 12 diverse collaborators examine the proposal, identify assumptions and develop the methodology.
2. Controlled pilot	An illustrative 20 to 30 participants examine approximately five questions, using the proposed methods and record format.
3. Public review	Invite the wider international philosophical community to identify weaknesses, challenge findings and propose improvements.
4. International assembly	Broader participation examines the tested architecture and begins formal records of findings.
5. Continuing endeavour	Independent communities and projects maintain, test and advance inquiry between gatherings and across generations.

The numbers and phases are working proposals, not recruitment quotas, dates or commitments. Success should be assessed by whether participants achieve greater mutual comprehension, precisely identify differences, develop clearer verification pathways and produce independently examinable records. More agreement alone is not success. The pilot should also test interoperability across independent groups, accessibility of methods,

translation quality and the practicality of offline use. A proposed fourth-list pilot could examine a small number of conduct propositions, test the separation of assent and undertaking, document differing grounds and design a consent-based way to examine implementation. It should not be evaluated by the number of people persuaded to sign.

A possible practical sequence is to publish the founding proposal and a contribution process; form independent founding inquiry groups; develop a minimal protocol, reference repository and offline toolkit; conduct pilot inquiries across independent groups; publish and review findings and test record exchange; then convene a founding assembly to examine the results and improve the architecture. This sequence avoids making a global gathering a prerequisite for useful work.

Recommended next steps

1. Consolidate the full founding discussion in a comprehensive proposal. The Founding Proposal, gathered in this book, is that proposed reference, subject to review.
2. Extract a concise Foundational Charter, preserving the distinction between permanent purpose, commitments, hypotheses and methods.
3. Critically examine both documents for contradictions, hidden assumptions, institutional risks and unintended consequences.
4. Revise the original founding presentation to reflect the expanded vision and provide a concise invitation to collaborate.
5. Establish an initial public website and open repository with a visible contribution process and unresolved questions.
6. Invite initial international contributors across traditions, regions and forms of expertise.
7. Develop the protocol through actual philosophical inquiries, including offline trials and independent implementations.
8. Organize a founding assembly informed by the results of those inquiries.

These are recommendations, not a settled launch plan. No venue, participant list, budget, date, technical standard or binding resource commitment has been established. The seven-document suite, public introduction and proposed implementation sequence remain open to examination. The full historical discussion should be preserved separately as source material when a suitable transcript is available, rather than allowing future versions of the proposal to replace the historical record.

16 Precedents: organizations to learn from

Organizations to learn from

No single existing organization provides a complete model. The following nine initiatives were identified in discussion as research leads. They are not partners or endorsements, and their current governance, practices and licenses should be checked before adopting specific mechanisms. The links identify the organizations to study.

Initiative	Specific lesson to examine
Wikimedia Foundation	wikimediafoundation.org. Global knowledge infrastructure combined with a decentralized movement, local user groups and affiliates; multilingual contribution and movement governance.
Apache Software Foundation	apache.org. Supporting legal and technical infrastructure for independent community-led projects; contribution-based responsibility and decentralized project governance.
Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)	ietf.org. Open standards proposals, working groups, publicly documented objections and the value of practical implementation.
Computational Democracy Project / Polis	compdemocracy.org. Open-source tools to identify patterns of agreement and disagreement across large populations and visualize different positions.
OpenStreetMap	openstreetmap.org. Distributed observations, contributions from local knowledge and shared open data.
PhilPapers and PhilArchive	philpapers.org and philarchive.org. Classification, discovery, organization and open access to philosophical research.
Decidim	decidim.org. Open-source participation infrastructure connecting physical meetings and digital participation, with community governance and a shared social contract.
Creative Commons	creativecommons.org. Open licensing, distributed global participation, local chapters and thematic working groups.
Zooniverse	zooniverse.org. Enabling members of the public to make meaningful contributions to research without academic qualifications.

The initial recommendation was to study Wikimedia most closely for movement architecture, Apache for community ownership, IETF for methodology and Polis for digital participation. Decidim, Creative Commons and Zooniverse are particularly relevant for offline participation, licensing and wider contribution.

The limits of these analogies matter. A technical standard may be adopted to enable practical interoperability even if some contributors disagree. That act does not establish philosophical truth. A tool that maps opinions can identify agreement and disagreement, but agreement alone is not verification. An openly edited encyclopedia can preserve knowledge without necessarily providing pathways for independent understanding or examining its implications through living. The proposed architecture should learn from established mechanisms without importing their purposes or limitations uncritically.

The Global Ethic was also discussed around the original presentation as a precedent for preserving differing grounds behind shared statements, avoiding claims to represent a universal ideology and distinguishing minimal common ground from a complete solution. This is relevant to List One: an agreement can be signed on different grounds, which should remain visible. The Fourth List goes beyond recording common ground by investigating the validity of claims and the possibility of independently verifiable understanding. This brief reference is not a new examination of the Global Ethic text.

17 Community Handbook

Founding draft for collective examination | 24 November 2026

A practical guide to independently starting, sustaining and connecting communities of inquiry, both offline and online.

Start here

The Fourth List is an open global endeavour to investigate whether a universally verifiable understanding of reality is possible, make that understanding accessible to every human being, and examine how humanity can live in accordance with it. The community is not a branch office of a global organization. It is a group of people voluntarily carrying the purpose forward, with the freedom to examine the initiative itself.

A community can begin with two people, paper and a question. It does not need a website, office, legal entity, central approval, academic credentials, financial contribution or acceptance of a philosophical doctrine. It may later operate a digital repository, develop research projects, collaborate with other groups or convene an assembly.

This handbook is a proposed implementation of the Founding Proposal, Foundational Charter, Open Protocol, Governance Framework and Platform Architecture. It is not an adopted membership policy, certification scheme or binding legal instrument. The suggested group sizes, time allocations, roles, forms and pilot cadence are working designs, intended to be tested and adapted. The Charter and Protocol are themselves founding drafts. No candidate human commitment is ratified here.

Contents

Section	Practical purpose
1. Start an independent community	First steps, identity and local charter
2. Invite and organize contributors	Participation, accessibility and responsibilities
3. Develop a local inquiry agenda	Choose questions and connect to existing work
4. Conduct a dialogue	Seven-stage method and session plan
5. Document the four lists	Record precise, scoped and revisable outcomes
6. Undertake independent verification	Examine claims and develop learning pathways
7. Examine commitments through living	Responsibility, restraint and voluntary evidence
8. Protect people and sustain the community	Consent, moderation, finances and continuity
9. Connect independent communities	Paper-to-digital, exchange, AI and protocol changes
10. Convene assemblies and projects	Preparation, follow-up and cross-community work
11. Run a founding pilot	Eight-week example and evaluation
12. Reusable toolkit	Forms, templates and illustrative completed record
13. Open decisions	Boundaries and work remaining (the source map is in Appendix G)

01 / Start an independent community

The first responsibility: establish a common purpose, not common conclusions

Participants may hold mutually incompatible philosophical positions. No one needs to surrender their present understanding in order to participate. The hypotheses that a common independently verifiable reality may exist and that every genuine contradiction can ultimately be resolved through sufficient understanding are open to examination, not prerequisites of belief. A community may explore existence, consciousness, the human being, knowledge, human purpose, relationships, society and nature without a centrally assigned agenda.

Seven steps to begin

1. Read the Charter and this handbook together. Identify what participants understand, what they question and what they propose to improve.
2. Invite a small group. As an initial experiment, 3 to 8 people may be manageable; two people are sufficient to begin. Include differences in outlook rather than recruiting only those who already agree.
3. Choose an accessible place or online room, agree a provisional meeting cadence and identify language, mobility, connectivity or other participation needs.
4. Assign a facilitator and documenter for the first meeting, with a second person available to review the record. These are responsibilities, not ranks.
5. Create a local community record and agree a simple conduct, privacy and resource policy. Publish only what participants authorize.
6. Choose one precise question. Prepare a statement of its significance, relevant concepts and initial reading or examination materials. Do not try to resolve the entire nature of reality in one meeting.
7. Hold the first inquiry, share the authorized record, invite correction and agree a voluntary next action. Decide whether and how to connect to other groups.

Local identity and autonomy

Choose a name that accurately describes the group, a contact route, a local repository or record folder, and an explicit statement of which protocol version and methods you are using. State any departures from the reference drafts. Do not imply official recognition, representation of humanity or endorsement by another community. No global directory listing is needed to begin. A community may develop a different method, fork the handbook, share improvements and reconnect without merging organizations, subject to applicable rights and licenses.

A minimum viable local setup

Requirement	Low-resource implementation
Meeting place	Quiet accessible room, library or online call
Shared materials	Printed question, blank paper, pens and local copies of the drafts
Record keeping	Dated folder, notebook or local spreadsheet; stable identifiers
Privacy	Separate private and shareable folders; explicit permission before publishing
Continuity	Next meeting or review date and voluntary action owners
Resources	Transparent voluntary contributions; no mandatory global fee

Do not delay inquiry until infrastructure is perfect. Equally, do not collect recordings, commitments or personal evidence before the group has a workable consent and safeguarding procedure.

02 / Invite and organize contributors

An invitation you can adapt

We are starting an independent community of The Fourth List, A World Assembly for Human Understanding. We want to investigate questions about reality and human living together, without requiring anyone to accept a particular philosophy. We will examine our own and one another's understanding, document where we agree and disagree, identify questions for further inquiry and consider what we voluntarily undertake to do or not do. You do not need a qualification, institutional affiliation or prior philosophical knowledge. You may join in your individual capacity, ask questions, challenge the method or contribute in other ways. The first session will explain the process and examine one question. Participation and publication are separate choices.

Working commitments to inquiry

Invite participants to examine the following proposed commitments: examine one's own understanding; comprehend another's position before evaluating it; acknowledge possible incompleteness or error; distinguish knowledge, belief and uncertainty; provide grounds for assertions; revise

positions when sufficient grounds arise; and avoid treating authority, tradition or popularity alone as proof. These are proposed practices, not a test of allegiance or an oath of belief.

Four responsibilities in an inquiry

Responsibility	Practical work
Presenting	State a claim, concepts, grounds, context and pathway to examination.
Examining	Check meanings, reasoning, assumptions and observations independently.
Facilitating	Protect equal opportunity to speak, locate differences and avoid directing conclusions.
Documenting	Record versions, responses, consent, objections, changes and next steps accurately.

A participant may carry more than one responsibility. Rotate roles as useful; a facilitator who presents a disputed position should hand facilitation of that part to someone else. For ongoing operations, identify a contact person, resource holder and safeguarding contact, with a route to an independent reviewer. No role establishes philosophical superiority.

Participation and access

Everyone is eligible to contribute. If a specific assembly has limited capacity, publish its selection criteria, reasons and an alternative contribution route. Preparedness, clarity, comprehension of other positions, ability to distinguish belief from knowledge, openness to examining assumptions and capacity for sustained inquiry may inform selection. Credentials can be relevant evidence but must not be prerequisites for contributing. Do not exclude someone merely because their philosophy is unfamiliar or unpopular.

Public readers, participants, ongoing members and officeholders carry different responsibilities, not different human or intellectual status. Universities, families, organizations and traditions may support people; signatures and understanding remain individual. Offer translation, plain-language notes, readable printing, breaks, remote or asynchronous contributions and an option to contribute privately. Ask what barriers actually exist

rather than assuming universal accessibility. Where children or vulnerable participants are involved, arrange appropriate safeguarding and lawful consent before collecting any records.

03 / Develop a local inquiry agenda

Choosing what to examine

Start with what participants genuinely want to understand. Look for related questions in other communities and invite people working on them to collaborate. A local group is free to investigate a question already being examined elsewhere, particularly if an independent test or different language or method could add value. The network makes needs visible; it does not assign work.

Prioritization criterion	Ask together
Foundational significance	What other questions depend on this?
Universal relevance	Who is affected, across contexts and cultures?
Consequence for living	What would better understanding enable?
Present understanding	What has already been examined and what remains unclear?
Possibility of investigation	What feasible next step could advance this inquiry?

Do not confuse urgency, popularity or ease of measurement with foundational significance. A difficult question may deserve long-term attention. Record the reasons for prioritization and any differing views; an operational choice to focus on one question is not a philosophical verdict.

From question to examinable proposition

A question invites investigation. A proposition states a claim that can be independently assessed. For example, the original candidate question, “Can prosperity be defined without comparing wealth?”, may yield several competing propositions. Ask contributors to articulate definitions of prosperity, wealth, comparison and sufficiency. Preserve the original question and link each proposition version to it. Where two languages use apparently equivalent terms, retain original wording and label disputed translations. If the question itself is ambiguous, revise it rather than force an answer.

Understand the larger architecture

A proposition may belong to a complete philosophical system. Record the system, its relevant premises, dependencies, sources and interpretation before extracting the claim. A participant may examine the individual proposition without accepting the entire system. Competing claims should be stated in a form their proponents recognize. Do not reduce a tradition to one sentence or assume its adherents have identical understandings.

Create a simple question map using cards or a shared document. Link questions with the proposed relationship (for example, depends on, challenges, clarifies, or relates to), the reason and the person proposing that link. A dependency is a claim about the architecture of inquiry, not an established fact. Preserve alternative dependencies. The map can reveal possible collaboration, gaps and questions of greater foundational significance.

The question bank should include the original eighteen candidates (Q001–Q018 in the Question Bank) as possible starting material, not a required syllabus. Invite independent contributions, edits, removals and prioritization. Claims concerning conduct may also generate List Four candidates. The separate Foundational Question Bank will develop this architecture further.

04 / Conduct a philosophical dialogue

Before the meeting

Send the exact question or proposition version, definitions, sources and purpose. Declare the intended participant scope and whether the session is exploratory or seeks a scoped record of agreement. Explain consent and the five response options. Invite participants to record their positions independently before discussion; these need not be publicly disclosed. Make time for someone who needs clarification or additional preparation. State that no consensus, signature or closure is required.

The seven-stage method

The reasons for each stage are given in Chapter 3, and the formal record in Open Protocol section 05.

Stage	Facilitator action and record
1. Independent position	Collect initial responses and grounds on the exact proposition before discussion.
2. Mutual comprehension	Ask participants to restate opposing views; seek confirmation or record remaining misunderstanding.
3. Identification of differences	Locate divergence in definitions, premises, observations, reasoning or conclusions.
4. Identification of foundations	Examine the assumptions, evidence and methods behind each position.
5. Collective examination	Explore suitable pathways, contrary findings, missing evidence and limitations.
6. Independent reassessment	Invite a fresh response and reasons for change or retention, without pressure.
7. Documentation	Review the record, preserve differences and scope, agree voluntary next steps.

The five responses are Yes (accept), No (reject), Undetermined (not concluded), Conditional (depends on stated conditions) and Needs clarification (cannot assess wording). Record non-response or absence separately. Only explicit Yes to the precise proposition counts as acceptance. A new or qualified proposition gets its own version and fresh responses. Initial positions and reassessments remain separate.

Example 90-minute first session (adaptable)

Minutes	Activity
0–10	Purpose, consent, roles, question and scope
10–20	Private independent responses and grounds
20–35	Restate positions; clarify meanings
35–55	Locate differences and examine foundations
55–70	Explore pathways and record what remains to examine
70–80	Independent reassessment
80–90	Review draft records and set next actions

If participants have not understood one another, remain at that stage. If independent verification requires more time, do not compress it into the meeting. A session can advance inquiry without reaching a conclusion.

Useful facilitation questions include: What do you mean by this term? What grounds support your claim? Can you state the other position in a way its presenter accepts? What observation or argument would challenge your conclusion? What remains unknown? End with the precise difference and a possible next examination, rather than a vote to settle truth.

05 / Document the four lists

Separate the records, connect the inquiry

Each list is a view of linked records rather than a mutually exclusive category. Publish the authoring group, date, declared participant scope, policy and protocol version, exact claim versions, individual grounds where authorized, and limitations. Never call local agreement universal agreement. The following rules implement the proposed Open Protocol section 07; they are not globally ratified thresholds.

List	What a local record should contain
1. Agreement	Precise proposition, definitions, unanimously accepting scoped signatories, their distinct grounds and verification status.
2. Disagreement	Incompatible positions, reasons, assumptions, exact point of difference and possible examination.
3. Inquiry	Question, significance, dependencies, existing work, possible methods and unresolved obstacles.
4. Commitment	Candidate responsibility or restraint, precise scope, grounds, objections, voluntary undertaking and evidence status separately.

Avoid false agreement

If six of eight participants accept a proposition, one rejects it and one is undetermined, the group of eight is not unanimous. A scoped agreement of the six may be recorded only if the narrower scope and the wider disagreement are visible, with authorized disclosure. Do not treat silence, non-response, a conditional answer, or a facilitator's summary as assent. A later signature is a separate dated record; it does not alter the historical participant scope.

If a contributor revises a claim, create a new version. Do not transfer signatures, responses or verification from the previous version. Keep an authorized history of revisions, challenges and corrections. If consent changes, preserve only permissible provenance and propagate notices as appropriate. A historical snapshot can remain accurate about that date without being the current position. New findings can challenge earlier conclusions. The same disagreement can also be a priority in List Three. A conduct claim can be examined through Lists One to Three while an undertaking appears in List Four.

Distinguish understanding from agreement

A record of acceptance does not prove that its signatories have independently verified the claim. Record linguistic clarity, intellectual agreement, shared understanding, independent verification and universal verifiability as different achievements. The community may record evidence and grounds, but it cannot confer truth or understanding by declaration. In the absence of established verification thresholds, report what was actually examined and by whom, not a definitive verdict.

After every session

Within a locally agreed interval, the documenter circulates a draft for participants to review, correct or restrict. Record confirmations, corrections and unresolved objections. Publish only the authorized version and link its source records. Share a readable summary in the group's languages, plus portable structured records if available. Record the next question and voluntary action owners. A later meeting should begin by revisiting the existing record, not by starting from memory.

06 / Undertake independent verification

Match the method to the claim

The six methods and the criteria for universal verifiability are introduced in Chapter 2.

Possible method	Appropriate domain or question
Empirical observation	What can be observed in physical reality?
Logical reasoning	Are the premises, inferences and conclusions consistent?
Experimentation	What happens under defined and repeatable conditions?
Self-observation	What can be examined in first-person experience and consciousness?
Interpersonal verification	Can other people independently examine the proposed understanding?
Lived demonstration	What implications of a claim about living can be examined in conduct?

These six methods are proposed domains of examination, not proof that every method is appropriate to every claim. The choice, sufficiency and limits of a method are themselves examinable. A subjective report is not automatically evidence of a universal property; an internally consistent argument is not automatically true of reality.

Develop a pathway another person can examine

Ask the presenter to state the understanding, its grounds, the process by which they arrived at it, a pathway for independent examination, necessary conditions and limitations. Specify observations or arguments that could challenge it. Make the pathway communicable, examinable, consistent, independently verifiable, open to challenge and applicable where it concerns living. If no adequate pathway is known, identify the claim as a hypothesis or articulated understanding rather than verified knowledge.

An independent examiner should attempt the pathway, document relevant dependencies on the presenter, identify the precise claim and method versions, record deviations and observations, distinguish interpretation from observation, and report supporting, contrary or inconclusive findings. Do not suppress unsuccessful attempts. A community can invite a second independent group to repeat or challenge the examination. Independence must be described, not merely asserted. No count of positive reports alone establishes universal validity.

Record the current state carefully

The Open Protocol proposes seven classifications: question, hypothesis, articulated understanding, examinable understanding, independently verified, universally verifiable and challenged. These are not a fixed ladder. The last may coexist with prior verification. If a group uses a status, disclose who assigned it, under what policy, to what revision and scope, and on what grounds. Where standards are not settled, describe the actual examination records instead of applying a definitive label.

Make understanding accessible

A learning pathway should include the original proposition or philosophical system, key concepts, a plain-language explanation, prerequisites, activities of independent examination, potential contrary findings, sources and limitations. Offer different levels and languages; retain original wording and disputed translations. Invite learners to state their own understanding, question the pathway and report what they independently examined. Completing reading, attending a course or repeating a teacher's conclusion does not establish understanding. Make shared materials and verification pathways freely accessible. The local group can submit an improved explanation without needing approval from the original author, subject to applicable reuse rights.

07 / Examine commitments through living

The fourth list in a local community

The fourth list is explained in Chapter 4.

List Four concerns what we will do and what we will not do. The twelve candidate restraints in the Founding Proposal are starting points for examination, not an accepted code. A community may formulate new responsibilities or restraints, including in human relationships, nature, knowledge, technology, economy and society. People may share a commitment for different philosophical reasons without resolving every underlying difference.

The question of whether universal human conduct can be derived from understanding reality remains open.

Distinction	What to record
Understanding	Why someone claims the conduct is appropriate and how they can examine it.
Agreement	Explicit acceptance of the conduct proposition.
Commitment	A separate, voluntary undertaking to act or refrain within a defined scope.
Demonstration	Evidence concerning actual conduct, including context and limits.

Seven-step commitment procedure

1. State a candidate conduct proposition and explain its significance. Identify it as responsibility, restraint or both.
2. Clarify definitions, affected people, contexts, difficult cases, conditions and possible exceptions.
3. Collect independent responses and examine reasons and objections through the dialogue procedure.
4. Record scoped agreement and remaining differences separately. Agreement is not an undertaking.
5. Invite voluntary, version-specific undertakings, identifying actor, scope, date, conditions and grounds. Refusal, uncertainty or withdrawal carries no philosophical penalty.
6. Develop a safe, proportionate and consented way to examine actual conduct. Keep self-report, observation and independent examination distinct.
7. Review implementation and contrary findings. Document revisions or withdrawal; a new proposition requires renewed agreement and undertaking.

Organizational commitments apply only to responsibilities that the organization is authorized to undertake. They do not establish the beliefs or personal commitments of employees, members or families. A community may maintain behavior-based safety rules without requiring philosophical

signatures. The proposed Declaration of Human Commitments may eventually link voluntarily published local records, but no community can declare it on behalf of humanity.

Examine living without policing it

The seven domains of living demonstration are individual living; family and relationships; education; production and exchange; society and governance; relationship with nature; and science and technology. Start with a bounded and low-risk practice, such as whether a meeting's actual process respects independent responses. State the claim, observable implications, context, period, affected parties, alternative explanations, method, safety and publication limits. Record partial fulfilment and contrary evidence. Avoid interpreting one act as proof of a person's whole understanding or character. A person can stop participating without punishment. Do not require intimate recordings, access to family finances, intrusive observation or a sacrifice of safety to demonstrate a commitment. In relationships of unequal power, consent requires particular care. Feed actual findings, including failures and ambiguities, back into inquiry rather than conceal them.

08 / Protect people and sustain the community

Consent and publication

Consent to attend is not consent to be recorded, quoted, named, published or replicated. Explain the exact intended uses, audience, retention period, reuse terms, and possible consequences before collecting material. Offer public, restricted and private record options. Obtain separate permission for audio, video, transcription, publication, reuse, federation and any AI processing of sensitive material. Do not assume an institution or family member can authorize publication on behalf of other people. Avoid collecting material that is unnecessary for inquiry.

Keep private responses and sensitive evidence under the local group's agreed access arrangements. Public records may use authorized identifiers

or redacted summaries; disclose the resulting limits on independent examination. Provide a correction, restriction and withdrawal contact. Explain that independently replicated public records may not be completely removable. Where appropriate and permitted, propagate correction or withdrawal notices, record acknowledgements, and retain only non-sensitive provenance. Applicable legal duties and safeguarding obligations must be assessed locally.

Local conduct and procedural review

Criticism, substantive disagreement, refusal to sign and changing one's mind are not misconduct. Harassment, threats, coercion, fabricated evidence, impersonation and unauthorized disclosure can warrant proportionate protective measures. Publish the local rules, examples, responsible people, reporting options and review procedure before applying them. A possible response pathway is confidential reporting, immediate safety assessment, recusal of conflicted reviewers, notice and opportunity to respond where safe, a reasoned proportionate decision, and independent review or appeal. Record only the necessary details. A temporary restriction may be appropriate in serious cases, but must be reviewed promptly. Avoid public personal misconduct rankings. No local restriction settles the truth of a proposition or prevents independent inquiry elsewhere. Where serious safety concerns arise, seek appropriate qualified local support rather than attempt to resolve them solely through philosophical dialogue.

Resources and ongoing responsibilities

Each group sustains its own activities and may voluntarily support shared projects. The six economic principles are autonomy, voluntary contribution, accountability, mutual support, independence of inquiry and open knowledge. Agree a simple budget, legal holder where necessary, authorization for expenditure, transparent reporting and a way to identify conflicts. No one may commit another group's resources. Distinguish compensation for work from ownership of findings. Shared foundational knowledge and verification pathways must remain free; lack of money should not prevent inquiry. Invite support for translation, accessibility

and less-resourced communities. For a pooled project, publish its need, budget, operator, deliverables, closure and handling of unused funds. Avoid mandatory global dues or dependence on a sponsor's preferred philosophical outcome.

Continuity without dependency

Keep a responsibility register, next review dates, backups and handover notes. Rotate or review administrative roles using locally disclosed procedures. A facilitator leaving should not interrupt the inquiry; the next person should be able to read the records and resume it. If a group becomes inactive, arrange authorized preservation or transfer of records and clarify unfulfilled obligations. Do not publish private data in the name of continuity.

09 / Connect independent communities

Paper is a valid starting point

An offline community may keep a numbered notebook, printed response sheets, a local folder and signed or otherwise authenticated records. Use a locally unique record identifier, revision, original date, author or authorized identifier, linked question and exact proposition version, applicable method, scope, provenance and access terms. Store private and shareable copies separately. A documenter may later transcribe records into the platform; the contributor reviews the exact transcription or confirms it using an accessible method. Record the original date and transcription date and distinguish paper signatures from digital attestations. Keep conflicting offline revisions for review rather than overwrite them.

Proposed exchange procedure

Step	Local operator action
1. Declare	Publish supported protocol version, record types, access policies and optional extensions.
2. Export	Share only authorized records with exact versions, typed links, provenance and reuse permissions.

Step	Local operator action
3. Validate	The receiving community checks required fields, origin and permissions, and flags unfamiliar extensions.
4. Import	Deduplicate exact revisions without overwriting independent records. Preserve conflicting assertions and flag identifier collisions.
5. Resolve links	Mark missing, restricted and unrecognized targets; compute local list views under a disclosed policy.
6. Update	Propagate permitted correction, withdrawal and restriction notices; record acknowledgement or failure.

The production interchange format is not settled. A pilot may use local identifiers and portable UTF-8 JSON or tabular files. A readable paper record may be referenced or transcribed with consent. The digital platform is a companion, not a gatekeeper. Communities can share selected records without migrating all their data to another operator. Compatibility claims must name the version, capabilities and tests actually completed. There is no centrally administered certification.

AI assistance in a local community

AI may help locate related questions, identify possible contradictions, translate, summarize authorized material, propose learning pathways, suggest examination methods and connect contributors. Label materially AI-assisted outputs and inspect primary sources. Participants confirm representations of their own positions. Do not use AI to sign, assign understanding or moral worth, fabricate verification, resolve disagreement silently, or declare consensus. Do not upload restricted material without appropriate authorization and safeguards. Communities may operate without AI or choose their own providers.

Improve the method itself

Any group may propose changes to the protocol or handbook. Record the problem, proposed change, alternatives, grounds, expected effects, impacted versions and compatibility risks. Invite independent examination and objections; test alternatives; document results and local adoption scope, preserve dissent and previous versions. An operational decision may require a deadline or delegated authority; it cannot declare philosophical

truth. Communities can fork the software, methodology, governance and educational materials under applicable rights and licenses. Publish differences and mappings, retain origin links, and reconnect wherever exchange is possible. No central permission is required.

10 / Convene assemblies and independent projects

An assembly is a milestone, not the whole inquiry

A local assembly can involve a single inquiry group; regional and world assemblies can bring independent communities together. Convening does not confer the right to represent a country, tradition or humanity. Participants speak from their individual understanding. Institutions may provide venues, funding and nomination without controlling contributions.

Period	Proposed responsibilities
Before	Publish purpose, dates, selection and access arrangements, costs, method version, questions, sources and participant scope; invite independent preparatory positions.
During	Use the seven-stage dialogue; provide translation, quiet preparation, record review, safeguarding and separate consent for recordings. Preserve dissent and pause unresolved inquiry.
Closing	Review scoped list snapshots, verification attempts and remaining questions; invite voluntary follow-up, not compulsory signatures.
After	Circulate authorized records for correction, publish findings and limitations, connect parallel inquiries, set review dates and identify improvements to the format.

A sample one-day local assembly can use the morning for preparation and independent positions, two facilitated examination sessions separated by breaks, and the final session for reassessment, records and next actions. Longer investigations continue after the gathering. A world assembly should emerge from demonstrated needs and ongoing work; it is not required to start a local group. Success is clarity and useful next steps, not attendance or the number of agreements.

Independent projects and working groups

Any contributor can initiate a project. Publish its question, purpose, scope, methods, related work, voluntary responsibilities, resource needs

and repository or contact point. Projects may collaborate, merge, fork or conclude independently. Illustrative projects from the Founding Proposal are Understanding Consciousness, Understanding Human Happiness, Dictionary of Human Understanding, Mapping Philosophical Systems, Family and Human Relationships, Universal Education, and The Fourth List Protocol. These are not assigned programmes.

The proposed open working groups cover Philosophy, Methodology, Technology, Education, Languages, Living, Communities, Assemblies, Governance and Resources. A person need not be a philosopher to contribute: software, translation, teaching, experimental design, family participation, design, coordination, historical documentation and student questions are all meaningful forms of work. Keep a contribution history of what was actually done, with attribution and consent. Do not rank contributors by volume or infer understanding from their activity.

Global participation

Seek communities across languages, regions, philosophical and intellectual traditions, independent and academic research, science and lived practice. Make participation practicable for people without travel resources or institutional access. Use distributed local gatherings, asynchronous contributions and consented exchange before assuming a global event is necessary. No demographic or institutional representation establishes the correctness of a proposition.

11 / Run a founding pilot

Suggested eight-week learning cycle

The Open Protocol proposes two independent communities, one offline-first and one digital, each examining a shared proposition and a candidate conduct commitment. This handbook proposes the following schedule as one way to run that test, not a required cadence. The communities independently choose their questions and methods; adapt the timetable to actual inquiry.

Week	Activity and expected record
1	Start both groups; record local identity, methods, consent, roles and accessibility needs.
2	Choose a shared question; clarify terms, dependencies and proposition revisions.
3	Conduct independent responses, dialogue and reassessment; produce scoped list snapshots.
4	Develop examination pathways; document observations and contrary findings.
5	Examine a candidate responsibility or restraint; separate agreement from undertaking.
6	Review any voluntary low-risk demonstration; share only consented summaries.
7	Exchange records and test preservation of provenance, scope, conflicts and restrictions.
8	Review clarity, limitations and access; publish improvements and next questions.

Protocol tests adapted for a community pilot

Test	Evidence to look for
T01 Meaning	Ambiguous terms remain distinct after exchange.
T02 Independent response	Original and revised responses remain separate.
T03 Scope	Partial assent is not reported as whole-group unanimity.
T04 Revision	Earlier signatures and verification do not transfer to edited claims.
T05 Challenge	Contrary findings survive exchange.
T06 Commitment	Agreement, undertaking and evidence are distinct.
T07 Consent	Restricted evidence is absent from public exports.
T08 Federation	Independent groups exchange linked records with origin and scope intact.
T09 Fork	Different policies are visible and compatible records discoverable.
T10 AI	AI interpretations are marked; no human assent is fabricated.
T11 Accessibility	An offline participant can verify a consented transcription.
T12 Withdrawal	A correction or restriction notice is transmitted and acknowledged without silently rewriting history.

Evaluate the quality of inquiry

Ask whether participants better understand each other's positions, precisely locate differences, develop independent examination pathways, retain contrary findings, make resources accessible and continue work

without dependence on a founder. For commitments, examine voluntary implementation and its limits, not number of signatures. Track actual obstacles, resource costs, burden on documenters, safeguarding issues, failed exchange tests and accessibility needs. Invite criticism of the process itself. Do not use time spent, attendance, ranking or consensus counts as measures of understanding. Publish an experimental report distinguishing tests attempted, passed, failed and not attempted. The pilot does not certify a community or establish universal claims.

12 / Reusable toolkit

Use these templates on paper or in a local digital system. Copy and adapt them; blank fields are intentional. Each record should retain its identifier, revision, original date, provenance, access scope and linked records. Do not force a person to disclose private reasoning to take part. Public records should carry only authorized material. The following forms are proposed human-readable counterparts to the Open Protocol record vocabulary, not finalized machine-readable schemas.

Form A / Community and responsibility record

Field	Complete locally
Community name and local identifier	_____
Purpose and Charter version	_____
Protocol version and departures	_____
Meeting format, language and cadence	_____
Contact, record location and access	_____
Facilitator, documenter and reviewer	_____
Resource and safeguarding contacts	_____
Local rules, appeal route, review date	_____

Form B / Question and proposition record

Field	Complete locally
Question ID, revision, wording	_____
Why does the question matter?	_____
Related questions and dependencies	_____
Proposition ID, revision, exact wording	_____
Key concepts and definitions	_____
Original source or system and context	_____
Grounds and possible contrary findings	_____
Proposed examination pathway	_____
Remaining limitations and next step	_____

Form C / Independent response and reassessment

Participant or authorized identifier: _____ Date: _____

Proposition ID and exact revision: _____ Scope: _____

Stage (initial or reassessment): _____

Response (choose one): Yes / No / Undetermined / Conditional / Needs clarification. If no response was received, the documenter records that separately.

Grounds, conditions or points needing clarification: _____

If reassessment, what changed or remained and why? _____

Publication choice and authorized identifier: _____

Confirmation or signature, where appropriate: _____

Form D / Dialogue and four-list snapshot

Field	Complete locally
Session ID, date, method version	_____
Question, exact claim versions	_____
Declared participant scope and roles	_____
Initial responses and mutual comprehension	_____
Differences, foundations, examination	_____
Reassessments and contrary observations	_____
List One: signatory scope, grounds, limits	_____
List Two: positions and precise differences	_____
List Three: questions and next pathways	_____
List Four: candidate, undertaking, evidence	_____
Unresolved objections, review and next action	_____
Authorized publication and version history	_____

Form E / Verification pathway and examination

Field	Complete locally
Claim and pathway ID/revision	_____
Grounds, method and prerequisites	_____
Examination steps and conditions	_____
Expected and contrary findings	_____
Examiner and relevant dependencies	_____
Steps actually followed and deviations	_____
Observations and separate interpretation	_____
Supporting, contrary or inconclusive result	_____
Limitations, safety, consent and next inquiry	_____

Form F / Candidate commitment, undertaking and demonstration

Field	Complete locally
Candidate ID, version and exact statement	_____
Responsibility, restraint or both	_____
Scope, affected parties and difficult cases	_____
Grounds, agreement and objections	_____
Separate voluntary undertaking, actor and date	_____
Conditions, period and review date	_____
Examination method, safeguards and consent	_____
Observations, self-report and independent evidence	_____
Contrary findings, limitations, next review	_____
Revision or withdrawal and authorized disclosure	_____

A person may agree but decline to undertake, and may undertake without making their evidence public. An undertaking is not proof of fulfilment. Use a new response and undertaking record for any revised commitment.

Form G / Consent and access record

Choice	Specify separately; no choice is assumed
Participation	Voluntary; can stop: _____
Recording / transcription	Allowed or declined, medium and purpose: _____
Naming / quotation	Authorized wording or identifier: _____
Publication	Exact material and audience: _____
Reuse / license	Permitted uses and restrictions: _____
Replication / federation	Scope and known limits of removal: _____
AI processing	Material, service and safeguards, or declined: _____
Storage and retention	Operator, access and review period: _____
Correction or withdrawal	Contact and procedure: _____
Confirmation	Participant, date, version: _____

Adapt the form to applicable legal requirements and the actual risks. Consent should be informed and specific, not a blanket waiver. A participant may request a private discussion without providing material for public records.

Form H / Exchange and method-change records

For an exchange, record sender and receiver, protocol version and capabilities, bundle identifier, authorized record revisions, access/reuse terms, validation findings, collisions or missing links, accepted/rejected records, correction notices and acknowledgements. Keep an import log rather than overwrite previous records.

For a proposed method change, record the proposer, date, problem, affected versions, proposed design, alternatives, impacts, compatibility risks, objections, trial evidence, local adoption decision and scope, unresolved issues and review date. Share the proposal and test findings where authorized. No local adoption binds every community.

Form I / Assembly and project plan

State the question or project purpose, independent contributors and responsibilities, relevant prior work, format, access arrangements, selection if necessary, resources and funding conditions, method version, preparation, recording policy, outputs, follow-up and review date. Invite collaboration without promising resolution. For an assembly, add participant scope, sessions, record reviewers and accessibility arrangements. Publish a consented outcome report.

Worked example / From inquiry to conduct

The following entirely hypothetical record illustrates the method. It is not an actual agreement, verification or commitment.

Record	Illustrative content
Question Q-01 v1	Can prosperity be adequately described by financial wealth alone?
Proposition P-01 v1	Financial wealth alone is insufficient to describe human prosperity.

Record	Illustrative content
Meaning	The group distinguishes assets from the ability to meet material needs and considers whether other dimensions belong in prosperity. Definitions remain contested.
Initial responses	A: Yes, B: Conditional, C: No, D: Needs clarification. Four-person scope; no unanimity.
Examination	A restates C's position; C confirms the description. B identifies ambiguity about "adequately". D requests clearer definitions.
Reassessment	A and B accept a revised, narrower proposition P-01 v2; C remains opposed; D is undetermined. Fresh records for v2, not transferred from v1.
List One	No whole-group unanimous agreement. A and B may authorize a scoped two-person agreement on v2; disclose the wider four-person scope.
List Two	What must prosperity include beyond financial assets, if anything? Preserve grounds and distinct meanings.
List Three	How can sufficiency be examined independently? Develop a pathway and invite further investigation.
List Four candidate C-01 v1	In this inquiry group, we will not describe a conditional or unrecorded response as unconditional assent.
Undertaking	A voluntarily undertakes C-01 v1 for the next three sessions. The other participants' undertakings are not assumed.
Demonstration	With consent, compare A's authorized session summaries with the underlying response records. Record mismatches, limitations and corrections. A short review cannot establish lifelong conduct.

The local documenter records authorized identifiers, definitions, grounds, version links and consent separately. Another community may challenge the proposition, test the method, or use a different definition of prosperity without accepting the first group's conclusions. The example demonstrates how the four lists can remain connected without being conflated.

13 / Open decisions

Decisions remaining open

Matter	What the pilot should help examine
Community formation and identity	Adequacy of the provisional local charter and capability statement; no official recognition scheme established.
Qualification and participation	Fair assembly selection, local responsibilities, accessibility, safeguards and alternate contribution routes.
Verification and List Four	Sufficiency of verification, admission thresholds, difficult cases and standards for voluntary demonstration.

Matter	What the pilot should help examine
Documentation and privacy	Consent validity, retention, correction, cross-border exchange and appropriate protection for vulnerable participants.
Governance and finance	Local decision thresholds, appeal arrangements, legal entities, financial responsibility and voluntary pooling.
Interoperability	Stable identifiers, production schemas, exchange, security, identity and compatibility assessment.
Reuse and institutional independence	Specific licenses, affiliation safeguards, Charter protection and amendment mechanisms; K4M2A's eventual role.
Learning and assemblies	Actual methods, languages, format, cadence, costs and indicators of progress.

Status of this handbook

This is an implementation proposal. The invitation, setup size, agenda, templates, eight-week pilot and illustrative records are newly drafted working designs, not previously agreed requirements or tested results. No community has been formed or certified through this document. Before public adoption, invite review by independent contributors and test with actual communities, including people with different languages, circumstances and philosophical positions. The source basis consists of the five named Fourth List drafts and the available founding discussion. Applicable legal, safeguarding and licensing arrangements need separate local review. The handbook should be freely adaptable once appropriate open licenses are adopted, and its own development should follow the open inquiry process it proposes.

Part Five: Open Questions

18 What remains undecided

Each companion document also ends with its own open decisions: Open Protocol, Governance Framework, Platform Architecture, Community Handbook. The Critical Review in the next chapter assesses them together.

What remains genuinely undecided

This chapter preserves questions identified in the founding discussion and a subsequent completeness audit. These are not decisions accepted by the initial proposer. They should become initial inquiries into the architecture itself.

Open question	Why it matters
What constitutes sufficient verification?	Independent reports do not necessarily establish truth. The criteria for a verification label must be examined.
How are different claim types examined?	Mathematical, empirical, metaphysical, ethical and experiential claims may require different standards.
What would count against H1 or H2?	The hypotheses about common reality and resolvability must remain examinable, including when findings oppose initial expectations.
How is global agreement represented?	Unanimity within one group is not unanimity across the network or humanity.
Can an agreement lose its status?	New evidence, objections, participants or changes of position may alter the current state of inquiry.
How is conceptual equivalence established?	Identical translations may conceal different meanings or philosophical contexts.
How are false or misleading contributions handled?	Permissionless inquiry needs standards of provenance, integrity, moderation and appeal without a central authority over truth.
Who determines protocol compatibility?	Compatibility assessment could become a new concentration of power or a barrier to independent communities.

Open question	Why it matters
How are methodological disagreements resolved?	The protocol must be capable of examining and improving itself, with open objections and alternatives.
How is common infrastructure sustained?	Distributed support may leave shared but unglamorous work underfunded and create unequal opportunities.
How is privacy protected in living demonstrations?	Private individual and family relationships must not automatically become public research records.
What happens if a foundational hypothesis is disproved?	The endeavour must accept contrary findings rather than protect its anticipated conclusions.
How does purpose survive institutional forks?	Freedom to diverge must be reconciled with clear, non-misleading identity and freedom to reconnect.
How are verification records assessed across communities?	Different methods, versions and evidentiary requirements may produce apparently conflicting status labels.
Who maintains reference specifications?	The network needs maintenance responsibility without exclusive control over the future of the protocol.
How are responsibilities earned and relinquished?	Contribution-based governance requires transparent entry, accountability, succession, removal and appeal.
How are operational deadlocks handled?	Practical decisions may require deadlines even when philosophical or methodological objections remain.
What licenses and legal arrangements are appropriate?	Open-source code, educational materials, documentation, data, identity and attribution may require distinct arrangements.
How should replicated records be corrected or withdrawn?	Traceability and federation create tensions with consent, privacy and correction of errors.
How should AI outputs be evaluated and disclosed?	AI may invent evidence, distort positions or obscure the human source of claims.
What is K4M2A's role?	Initiation and resource support must not become exclusive ownership or permanent philosophical authority.
How can progress be measured responsibly?	Metrics should reveal progress without encouraging inflated counts, superficial consensus or competitive ranking.
How can a founding charter remain protected yet examinable?	The permanence of purpose must not immunize its formulation or the founders' assumptions from scrutiny during founding.
How do we ensure safety and accessibility in participation?	Moderation, misconduct, discrimination, accessibility and practical support need transparent procedures.

Additional open questions introduced by List Four

These questions arise from the renaming and extension. They are deliberately left open rather than silently settled on behalf of the initial proposer or future contributors.

Question	Why it matters
What is the relationship between understanding reality and appropriate conduct?	Descriptive and normative claims require examination of their connection.
Minimum shared ethics or universally appropriate living?	The long-term research ambition remains to be collectively examined, without blocking voluntary interim commitments.
What is sufficient for inclusion in List Four?	Candidate, agreement, undertaking and demonstration are distinct; founding decision 78 is unresolved.
How should positive responsibilities be formulated?	The twelve original candidates concern restraint; positive commitments require their own independent examination.
What do the candidate restraints mean in difficult cases?	Ambiguous definitions or exceptions could yield misleading consensus or commitments.
What constitutes adequate demonstration?	Isolated observations, self-report and sustained independent examination are not equivalent.
Can a person withdraw or revise a commitment?	Informed consent and version integrity must coexist with historical traceability.
How should conflicting undertakings be examined?	Different commitments may be incompatible in particular contexts, requiring further inquiry.
How should private evidence be protected across federated nodes?	Replication may undermine consent or expose family and other sensitive records.
How do organizations undertake commitments?	Organizational responsibility must not be confused with the individual understanding of members.
Who may describe a commitment as shared globally?	Local assent cannot be represented as a mandate from humanity.
How should a Declaration of Human Commitments be maintained?	Its exact place in the foundational document suite and the relationship between versions and forks remain open.
How do we avoid an instrument of moral ranking or coercion?	Independence of inquiry and voluntary participation must survive the new conduct architecture.

Coherence of the accepted architecture

The major decisions are not isolated preferences. They are connected by the principle that understanding belongs to individuals while inquiry can be collective. If no institution can understand on behalf of another human being, independent inquiry requires freedom to examine claims. To cooperate across independent communities, the endeavour needs an open protocol. Federation allows communities to retain their records while making inquiry cumulative. Forking prevents exclusive control of the methodology; reconnecting prevents divergence from becoming needless fragmentation. Distributed support avoids reintroducing centralized control through finance. Open founding puts these commitments into practice in the creation of the endeavour itself.

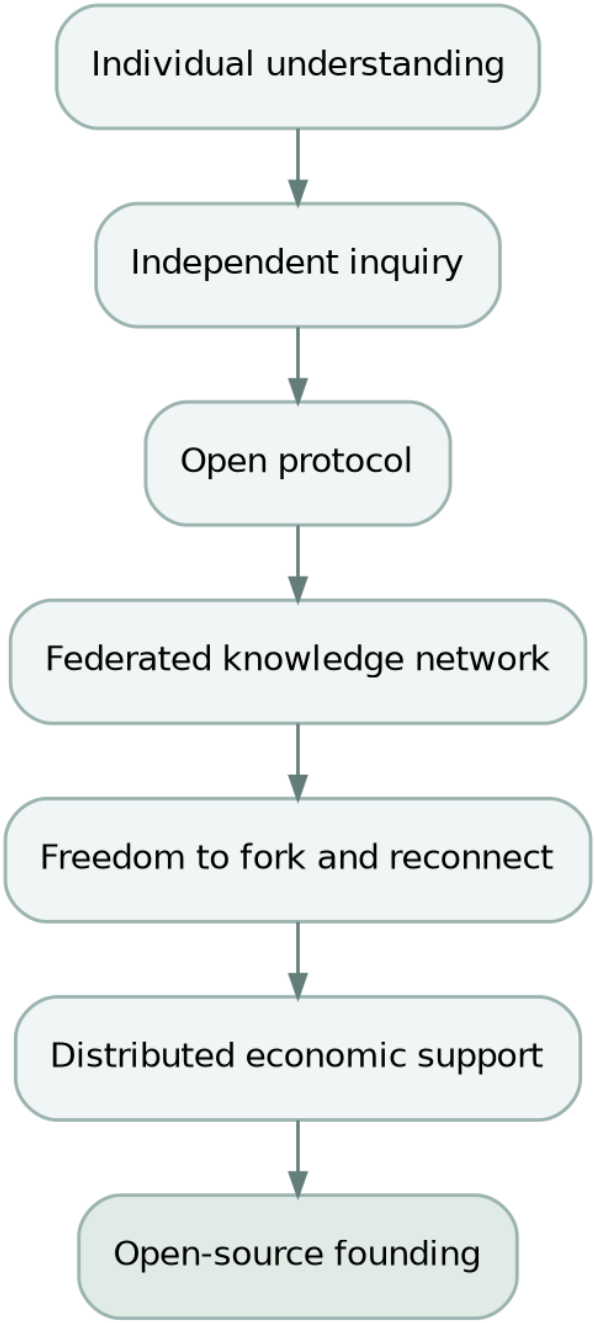
Individual understanding
Independent inquiry
Open protocol
Federated knowledge network
Freedom to fork and reconnect
Distributed economic support
Open-source founding

Figure 9: ***Figure 9. Reasoning connecting the founding commitments.*** *Individual understanding grounds independent inquiry, which motivates an open protocol, federation, fork and reconnect rights, distributed support and open-source founding.*

This is the rationale proposed in the founding discussion and expanded in the completeness audit. The connections are not a claim that this architecture is the only possible implementation. Each should be examined for actual coherence, tradeoffs and unintended consequences. The founding proposal should itself be the first object of collective inquiry under its own principles.

19 Critical review of the founding architecture

Review draft | 24 November 2026

Review conclusion: suitable for open founding discussion, not ready for adoption as a validated protocol or for unrestricted collection and federation of human evidence.

This review examines the seven founding drafts (the other documents gathered in this book) as a connected system. It does not revise them, ratify their contents, certify philosophical findings, or decide unresolved questions on behalf of the founders. Its recommendations are proposals for the first open inquiry into The Fourth List itself.

01 / Executive assessment

The strongest feature is the consistent separation of individual understanding from institutional authority, and the extension of that principle into open inquiry, federation, distributed support and voluntary conduct. The fourth list makes the connection between understanding and living explicit without requiring that every disagreement be resolved first. Across the seven drafts, those commitments are largely coherent.

The most important weakness is that the documents describe the desired properties of the institution more precisely than the conditions under which those properties can actually be established. An open method is not necessarily a valid method; a documented verification is not necessarily a successful verification; a federated system is not necessarily a decentral-

ized distribution of power. These are hypotheses about institutional design that need to be tested.

There are four priority areas. First, the philosophical standards must distinguish kinds of claims and evidence, particularly metaphysical and normative claims. Second, the four lists need rules that resist misleading selection of participants, ambiguous language and premature claims of resolution. Third, open records, voluntary conduct and independent governance need concrete protections against coercion, disclosure and misuse. Fourth, the initial implementation should be substantially smaller than the long-term architecture.

Source key and method

Code	Document examined	Version	In this book
FP	Founding Proposal	v0.3	Chapters 1–5, 7–16, 18; references to its Parts are given as chapter numbers
CH	Foundational Charter	v0.1	Chapter 6
OP	Open Protocol	v0.1	Appendix A (same section numbers)
GF	Governance Framework	v0.1	Appendix B (same section numbers)
PA	Platform Architecture	v0.1	Appendix C (same section numbers)
HB	Community Handbook	v0.1	Chapter 17 (same section numbers)
QB	Foundational Question Bank	v0.1	Appendix D

The review uses the actual Markdown editions of all seven documents and references their named parts, articles, sections and question IDs. It compares foundational commitments with procedural rules, record models, illustrative examples and pilot plans. Findings distinguish textual mismatches, specification gaps, design tensions and empirical risks. An acknowledged open decision is not automatically a defect; it becomes a blocker when an activity would be unsafe or misleading without it. The review is a desk-based examination, not a legal review, field study, security audit, philosophical proof or executed conformance test. The Word

editions have not been independently line-by-line compared against their Markdown counterparts in this review.

Priority definitions

Priority	Meaning
P0	Resolve or explicitly constrain before the relevant activity begins. A bounded paper pilot or draft publication may still be possible.
P1	Resolve through the founding pilot before a wider experimental release or assembly claiming protocol compatibility.
P2	Important for long-term resilience; investigate before scale or formal adoption.

The review identifies 26 issues: 8 P0, 13 P1 and 5 P2. Priorities are recommendations, not collective decisions. All remain open until their grounds and proposed remedies have been examined.

02 / Philosophical foundations

CR-01 | H1 and H2 lack decisive examination criteria (P1)

Source: Ch. 2, hypotheses of common reality and resolvability; CH Article III; OP §01; QB Q020, Q027. **Type:** acknowledged gap.

H1 asks whether common independently verifiable reality is possible; H2 proposes that every genuine contradiction can ultimately be resolved through sufficient understanding. The documents properly leave both open. However, H2 can become immune to criticism if every continuing disagreement is explained away as insufficient understanding. Neither repeated agreement nor a finite number of successful inquiries proves the universal claim. Similarly, a failed inquiry does not by itself disprove either hypothesis.

Proposal: distinguish logical contradictions between precisely formulated claims, incompatible empirical findings, normative conflicts, ambiguous meanings and distinct preferences. Define resolution relative to the kind of conflict. For H1 and H2, record the competing interpretations, implications, what would count against them and what remains untestable. Permit

indefinite uncertainty and revision of the hypotheses. Avoid treating a person's rejection of either hypothesis as a lack of understanding.

Examination: independent thinkers should formulate the strongest counterarguments to each hypothesis before hearing the founders' preferred explanation. The output is a public research record, not a yes/no verdict on all reality.

CR-02 | Verification is under-specified by claim type (P0)

Source: Ch. 2, methods and criteria; CH Article VI; OP §06; HB §06; QB Q026. **Type:** acknowledged gap with misleading-label risk.

The six methods are valuable, but the documents do not establish how to decide whether evidence is sufficient for a particular claim. Logical validity does not establish the truth of premises; repeated first-person reports do not independently establish a metaphysical explanation; a successful social experiment may not generalize beyond its conditions. The OP explicitly says thresholds remain open, so this is not an inconsistency in the text.

Proposal: introduce an experimental claim-type field and a method/evidence matrix. A claim can have more than one type. Require an explicit conclusion scope, alternative explanations and limitations. In the initial pilot, publish the examinations themselves without a definitive universal-verification badge.

Claim type	Minimum useful examination	Limitation to retain
Formal or logical	Definitions, premises, validity and counterexample	Validity is relative to premises or axioms.
Empirical or causal	Observations, methods, controls, uncertainty and competing explanations	Generalization and causation need separate grounds.
Experiential	First-person report, conditions and interpretive alternatives	Similar reports are not proof of identical experience.
Metaphysical	Coherence, competing accounts, implications and any discriminating observations	Some accounts may be empirically underdetermined.
Normative	Reasons, values, affected parties, consistency and difficult cases	Description alone does not entail an obligation.

Claim type	Minimum useful examination	Limitation to retain
Mixed or practical	Separate descriptive, causal and normative components; assess effects	A successful implementation does not prove every premise.

Examination: two reviewers independently classify five claims, compare disagreements and identify what evidence would change their conclusions. A reviewed pilot policy should specify what labels can and cannot mean.

CR-03 | Independent verification can reproduce shared assumptions (P1)

Source: Chs. 2 and 3, distributed independent verification; OP §§02, 06; PA §04; QB Q025–Q030. **Type:** design tension.

The protocol records examiner dependencies, but it does not specify what degree of independence is required. Ten people taught by the same teacher using the same interpretive framework may report the same finding. Their observations may still be informative, but they are not ten fully independent tests of the explanation.

Proposal: document source, training, shared instruments, collaboration, funding and prior exposure where relevant. Distinguish independent reasoning, independent data collection, independent reproduction of a method and independent criticism. Preserve negative and inconclusive results. Do not create a universal numeric independence score.

Examination: have two groups use the same pathway and a third group propose an alternative method; report whether observations, interpretations and assumptions differ. Do not call the result universal verification.

CR-04 | Epistemic classifications can harden into authority (P1)

Source: Ch. 3, status of understanding; CH Article VI; OP §06; PA §§04–05. **Type:** design tension.

The seven classifications include both record kinds (question, hypothesis) and assessments (independently verified, universally verifiable, challenged). They are intentionally non-linear, but a single status field or ranked badge could flatten that distinction. A challenge can coexist with

supporting evidence. A label assigned by a local policy is not a property of reality itself.

Proposal: separate record type, version lifecycle, examination outcome, attributed assessment and challenge status. Permit multiple incompatible assessments for the same claim. Display the assessor, method, scope, policy and date next to the label. Exclude the universal-verifiability label from the first pilot interface except as a research question.

Examination: give two nodes different defensible assessments of one claim and verify that import and display preserve both without upgrading either to a global verdict.

CR-05 | Appropriate conduct cannot be inferred from description alone (P1)

Source: Ch. 4, decision 76; CH Articles II, VIII; OP §08; QB Q032, Q054.
Type: philosophical gap.

The aim of investigating whether universally appropriate conduct follows from understanding reality is open, as it should be. A descriptive finding about human interdependence does not by itself establish a specific obligation unless the practical or normative reasoning connecting them is also made explicit. A shared commitment may arise from different normative grounds without resolving this issue.

Proposal: require a conduct proposition to separate its descriptive premises, normative premises or proposed bridge principles, practical inference, intended beneficiaries and counterexamples. Invite competing accounts, including those that reject the possibility of deriving universal conduct from reality. Maintain the possibility of provisional shared commitments while the larger inquiry remains unresolved.

Examination: compare at least three arguments for the same candidate restraint, identifying which premises are shared and which are disputed. Do not classify the restraint as established truth merely because participants support it.

03 / The four lists and knowledge architecture

CR-06 | Scoped unanimity can become a misleading agreement mechanism (P0)

Source: Ch. 3, List One; CH Article VI; OP §07, List One calculation; HB §§05, 12 worked example; PA §05. **Type:** design tension across consistent texts.

OP and HB permit a clearly labelled agreement among a narrower set of signatories even when a larger inquiry is not unanimous. They also require the broader scope to be disclosed. That safeguard is essential, but it is insufficient if an interface prominently displays the favourable subgroup and hides non-assent in a secondary view. A group of ten could generate eight-person, six-person or even one-person "unanimous" records by choosing only supporters.

Proposal: distinguish an inquiry cohort, a signed common-ground record and an individual endorsement. Require declared cohort scope before responses; display all response categories and unknown or withheld positions as permitted. Use "8 of 10 eligible participants assented" for the broader session; reserve "unanimous in the declared cohort" for full explicit assent to that exact version. A narrower record should be called a scoped signatory agreement, not a new cohort verdict. Minimum publication criteria for a collective record are open; never claim representation of humanity.

Examination: build a test with eight Yes, one No and one Undetermined, then a withdrawal and a version change. A reader must be able to identify the original scope, current scope, status and limitations without opening a hidden panel. Include this extension to T03 and T04.

CR-07 | Disagreement, uncertainty and non-participation need distinct records (P1)

Source: OP §§05, 07, 14; HB §§04–05, Form C and worked example; QB inquiry procedure. **Type:** minor semantic gap.

The response vocabulary already separates Yes, No, Undetermined, Conditional and Needs clarification. The OP example has two Yes responses and one Needs clarification, correctly treating the latter as not a rejection. But a list view that shows only agreement versus disagreement can misrepresent uncertainty as dissent or silence as consent.

Proposal: require separate counts and meanings for incompatibility, semantic ambiguity, insufficient evidence, conditional assent, undetermined, no response and withheld publication. List Two should record a genuine difference when established; unresolved clarification can be routed to List Three without inventing a contrary claim. The interface should never infer a private response from absence.

Examination: run the same six-response scenario through the paper form, export and digital view and compare the semantics, not only totals.

CR-08 | Question dependencies can silently become agenda control (P2)

Source: Chs. 3, 7, 12 decision 56; OP §§03–04; PA §06; QB dependency architecture. **Type:** acknowledged design tension.

The QB correctly treats dependency links as examinable claims and permits cycles. However, discovery algorithms or visualizations may turn a proposed dependency into an implicit prerequisite. A highly connected question is not necessarily the most important, and an underrepresented language may have a sparsely connected graph.

Proposal: distinguish a necessary logical prerequisite from a useful clarification, empirical dependency, application, overlap or contested association. Show provenance and alternate mappings. Do not compute a single global priority score. Let communities select their own work while displaying unmet needs and conflicting dependency claims.

Examination: compare at least two independent mappings of the same question set and test whether both are discoverable without suppressing isolated or minority questions.

CR-09 | The record model is conceptually rich but not yet a normative schema (P1)

Source: Ch. 7; OP §§02–03, 14; PA §04; HB Forms B–H; QB templates. **Type:** acknowledged specification gap.

The ten original units, five List Four extensions and supporting operational records are consistently carried forward. But minimum subject matter is not a machine-validated specification. The abstract envelope includes access and reuse, while OP §11 also calls for applicable retention policy; the example in §14 does not show a retention field or separate consent references. This is an illustrative omission, not evidence that the drafts have already agreed a contradictory schema.

Proposal: publish a versioned data dictionary separating required, optional and prohibited fields for each record type. Include retention and consent policy references where appropriate, null/unknown semantics, typed version links, valid state transitions and dependency handling. Private evidence and publication permission should not be merged into the public payload. Align Forms A–I, examples and exports with the schema. Keep paper mapping possible.

Examination: round-trip a complete hypothetical record package through two independently built adapters. Check missing, unknown, invalid and redacted fields; do not treat an illustrative JSON snippet as a full compatibility specification.

CR-10 | Semantic equivalence is not automatic across languages (P1)

Source: CH Article VII; OP §04; PA §§06, 10; HB §§04, 06; QB Q046. **Type:** acknowledged gap.

The drafts preserve original wording and prohibit automatic transfer of signatures to translations. They do not yet specify how a translated proposition becomes usable for cross-language inquiry. A translation can be linguistically fluent while changing a philosophical concept or the conditions of a commitment.

Proposal: record original language, version, translator, alternative meanings, confidence limits and review history. A participant may confirm that the translation expresses the proposition they examined, without claiming universal conceptual equivalence. Unresolved equivalence should produce a linked translation candidate rather than an automatic merge. Use human bilingual review for consequential commitments and a plain-language restatement checked by the original participant.

Examination: two independent translators examine a term such as prosperity or understanding and record divergences; verify that both translations survive exchange and no earlier assent moves automatically.

04 / The fourth list: responsibility and restraint

CR-11 | Candidate restraints require difficult-case examination (P0)

Source: Ch. 4, decision 71 and 77; OP §08; QB R01–R12, P01–P06. **Type:** open design risk.

None of the twelve candidate restraints has been ratified. This distinction must remain visible. Some candidates can become impractical or misleading without specifying context. R02 concerns initiating violence to resolve differences; it needs a distinction between aggression, protective intervention and immediate safety. R09 requires examining technological consequences; what depth of examination is proportionate for a minor tool versus a high-risk system? R11 concerns future generations, but future consequences are uncertain. R01 and R03 require clarity about benefit, reciprocity, deprivation and affected people.

Proposal: before inviting undertakings, record the intended conduct, actors, affected parties, foreseeable conflicts, conditions, uncertainty, limits and review process. For each candidate solicit a plausible difficult case and an objection from an affected person. Do not add silent exceptions or rewrite the original wording without a new version.

Examination: begin with a low-risk, narrow procedural commitment, such as not knowingly misrepresenting another participant's stated position. R05, concerning knowledge and belief, can be examined through consented inquiry records. Avoid asking for sweeping lifelong commitments during the pilot.

CR-12 | Voluntary signatures can become a social conformity mechanism (P0)

Source: CH Article VIII; OP §08; GF §08; HB §07 and Form F. **Type:** implementation risk despite explicit safeguards.

The texts prohibit compulsory signatures and moral ranking. In an offline group, a founder, employer, teacher, family member or respected philosopher may still implicitly pressure participants. A public refusal or withdrawal can invite exclusion. An organizational signature may be mistaken for employee assent.

Proposal: separate agreement from undertaking in time, consent and interface. Offer private, anonymous where feasible, or non-published decisions; no public list of non-signers. Provide a confidential way to withdraw, report pressure and continue inquiry without retaliation. Ensure organizational commitments describe authorized actions of the entity rather than individual beliefs. Apply local conduct and safety rules independently of List Four.

Examination: have an independent reviewer observe whether a participant can decline, challenge or withdraw an undertaking without loss of access or status. No real participant should be pressured as part of a test; use hypothetical scenarios and anonymous voluntary feedback.

CR-13 | Evidence of living can become intrusive surveillance (P0)

Source: Ch. 4; CH Articles VII–VIII; OP §§08–09, 11; GF §§08–09; PA §11; HB §§07–08, Forms F–G. **Type:** safety and privacy risk.

The documents already recognize that evidence about family and personal relationships should not be collected indiscriminately. The residual risk is that a well-intentioned community equates richer records with stronger

proof and pressures affected people to disclose private life. Consent of the participant alone cannot authorize information about others. Evidence of an act cannot establish the person's entire life or inner state.

Proposal: restrict the first pilot to low-risk observable conduct within the inquiry itself. Use hypothetical examples for sensitive topics. Do not collect intimate records, health information, audio/video or identifiable third-party accounts for the pilot. Before any expanded demonstration, require a purpose, necessity assessment, consent of affected people, secure local handling, retention limit, independent review and a safe exit route. Document limitations rather than seeking proof of a person's worth or completeness.

Examination: attempt an export of a hypothetical restricted evidence record; confirm no private content, identifying references or AI context leak into the public package. Extend T07 and T12.

CR-14 | A declaration needs scope, expiry and accountability rules (P1)

Source: Ch. 4, proposed Declaration of Human Commitments; OP §08; GF §08; HB §07. **Type:** acknowledged gap.

The proposed declaration is versioned and voluntary, but minimum inclusion and demonstration thresholds remain open. A signature may be current, withdrawn, time-limited, suspended pending review or superseded. Publishing a prominent declaration without showing those distinctions risks reproducing the weakness of declarations measured by signatories rather than conduct.

Proposal: distinguish candidate statement, scoped agreement, active undertaking, completed time-bound undertaking, withdrawal and separately assessed evidence. Publish the scope, period and limitations of any declaration edition. Do not publish a universal human declaration on behalf of non-signatories. Offer a review and correction route, but do not create an international tribunal over participants' lives.

Examination: simulate a version change, expired undertaking, organizational change of authority and withdrawal. All prior records retain only the history permitted by consent and law; current views reflect the change.

05 / Institutional and governance architecture

CR-15 | Permanence and freedom to fork need an explicit boundary (P1)

Source: Ch. 12, decision 24, 49–53; CH Articles I, XI–XII; GF §§06, 11.
Type: genuine constitutional tension, not an established contradiction.

The Charter protects the purpose while permitting forks of the entire institutional architecture. A fork might change the purpose itself and still claim the original identity. Freedom to reuse a method does not necessarily imply that a changed purpose should be represented as the same endeavour. Equally, a central identity regulator would compromise independence.

Proposal: distinguish lawful freedom to adapt from truthful description of purpose, affiliation and interoperability. A fork with a changed purpose remains free to exist and reuse licensed material, but states its distinct charter and differences. A shared directory may apply transparent criteria to its own listing without granting universal membership or exclusive philosophical authority. The exact Charter protection and identity mechanism remain open.

Examination: consider three forks: a technical fork, a different verification methodology, and a fork rejecting the founding purpose. Record what remains common and how each would describe itself without misleading others. Test an appeal from directory exclusion.

CR-16 | Decentralization does not remove the need for legitimate local decisions (P0)

Source: CH Articles IX–XII; OP §12; GF §§03–05, 07; HB §§01–02, 08.
Type: implementation blocker for community operations.

The governance framework recognizes decision classes, delegation and deadlines, but quorum, thresholds and delegation limits are open. A small

group can begin voluntarily, yet without a stated fallback it may be unable to remove a conflicted moderator, authorize shared expenditure or respond to harmful conduct. A founder's informal authority can become the actual default rule.

Proposal: each pilot community adopts a short, public local operating agreement before commencing. Specify who may make routine decisions, limits, review and replacement, how affected people are consulted, fallback for deadlock, emergency authority, conflicts, access to records and appeal. Decisions affecting safety or legal rights require proper authorization. No fallback vote determines truth. A universal governance rule is unnecessary at this stage.

Examination: simulate a conflicted facilitator, a blocked operational decision and an urgent disclosure incident; identify the actor, authority, deadline, review and outcome in each case.

CR-17 | Procedural power may become epistemic power through visibility (P1)

Source: Chs. 12, 14; CH Article IX; GF §§05–07; PA §§06, 09. **Type:** capture risk.

Maintainers cannot determine truth, but they can determine which claims are discoverable, how challenges are indexed and whether a contribution is included. Search, moderation, release policies and directory inclusion shape actual participation. The distinction between procedural and philosophical authority needs enforceable practices, not only language.

Proposal: disclose ranking and inclusion criteria, permit alternate indexes and export, preserve substantive challenges, separate safety-based removal from disagreement, and provide reasoned appeal to an independent reviewer. Review concentration of editorial roles, control over credentials and discoverability of minority views without ranking participants.

Examination: a hypothetical well-supported objection to a maintainer's own proposition should be searchable, reviewable and portable; if ex-

cluded, the procedural grounds and appeal route should be discoverable subject to privacy.

CR-18 | Cross-community harm lacks a coordination mechanism (P0)

Source: OP §11; GF §§06–09; PA §§08–11; HB §§08–09. **Type:** unresolved safeguarding gap.

A local community can moderate its own sessions, but harassment, impersonation or coercive disclosure may cross node boundaries. No central tribunal is desirable, yet independent operators need an interoperable way to respond to credible incidents. A remote community can choose not to cooperate. Automatic federation can magnify harm before review.

Proposal: define a minimal incident notice with evidence class, affected records, limited disclosure, requesting contact and requested action. Receiving operators independently assess, quarantine when proportionate, communicate acknowledgement and review, and provide appeal. Allow a node to suspend exchange for safety without claiming philosophical invalidity. Maintain a documented contact route for emergencies; do not create a global blacklist of people or philosophies.

Examination: simulate a leaked restricted record, an impersonated account and a false report. Confirm proportionate action, due process, controlled disclosure and no automatic network-wide punishment.

CR-19 | Founding ownership, rights and licenses remain unresolved (P0)

Source: Chs. 8, 12, 13, 15; CH Articles I, XI–XII; GF §§06, 11; PA §12. **Type:** acknowledged legal and operational gap.

The founding documents promise open-source software, openly reusable knowledge, institutional forkability and independence from K4M2A. They explicitly leave license choices and legal structures open. Public access by itself does not grant permission to copy, modify or redistribute. A trademark, domain, repository owner, paid maintainer or fiscal host can still concentrate practical control.

Proposal: before inviting external contributions into a public repository, confirm authority to publish and define contribution terms, license scope for code, documentation and data, exclusions for personal evidence, attribution, rights handling and project identity. Document who controls domains, credentials and initial resources, how they may be transferred, and what happens if a supporting organization leaves. Obtain suitable legal review; no license or legal entity is selected in this review.

Examination: a new contributor and an independent implementer must be able to identify what they can reuse, what remains restricted, who owns their contribution and how to fork permitted material. Test exit and credential handover.

CR-20 | Distributed support may underfund essential common work (P2)

Source: Ch. 13; CH Article X; GF §10; PA §12; HB §08. **Type:** economic risk acknowledged in the proposal.

Local autonomy does not guarantee funding for accessibility, moderation, security patches, archives or multilingual maintenance. Wealthier groups may have more visibility and a greater ability to sustain technical work, even without formal voting power. Volunteer dependence can also impose hidden labor costs on facilitators and translators.

Proposal: maintain a public list of shared needs, scope and maintenance costs, with voluntary task-specific pooling, accountable expenditure and exit conditions. Budget in-person and technical work honestly, including contributor time. Use independently supported accessibility and translation projects rather than mandatory global fees. Separate resource decisions from philosophical findings.

Examination: estimate actual time and cost of the pilot, identify work that would otherwise remain undone, and test a small voluntary shared resource arrangement before designing a permanent financial institution.

06 / Platform, interoperability and human protection

CR-21 | Federated exchange is not yet a security or compatibility specification (P1)

Source: OP §§03, 10, 13–14; GF §06; PA §§03–04, 08, 11, 13. **Type:** acknowledged technical gap.

The documents define a transport-neutral envelope, exchange procedure and test cases. They leave identifiers, cryptographic signatures and transport open. Namespace collisions, tampered content, stale versions, duplicate events, missing dependencies and replay can all affect records without changing the underlying philosophical claim. An implementation must not claim interoperability merely because two exports use JSON.

Proposal: define the smallest experimental interchange format and validation profile with stable identifiers, version semantics, provenance, origin authentication appropriate to the pilot, duplicate handling, reference resolution and explicit failure states. Keep data import quarantined until validation. A signature attests origin or integrity, not truth. Retain original payloads only where authorized. Define a compatibility matrix and fixtures for independent implementations.

Examination: import identical, conflicting, malformed, replayed, missing-reference and restricted packages through two independent adapters. No unauthorized record may become public; unresolved references and incompatible versions remain visible as such.

CR-22 | Withdrawal cannot guarantee erasure from a public network (P1)

Source: CH Article VII; OP §§03, 11, T12; GF §09; PA §11; HB Form G. **Type:** acknowledged privacy and architecture tension.

The drafts explicitly acknowledge that replicated copies cannot be guaranteed to disappear. A correction or restriction notice being acknowledged is not the same as every copy being removed. A record may contain personal data in a derived summary, link, search index, cache or AI trace, even if the original payload is restricted.

Proposal: make minimal publication the default. Specify withdrawal semantics for new views, local stores, backups, indexes, derived content, caches and downstream nodes. Keep private records out of federation. Define acknowledgement and failure states, and never claim universal deletion. Where privacy requires removal, preserve only non-identifying historical metadata if lawful and appropriate. Review applicable data handling obligations before publishing real personal evidence.

Examination: simulate a withdrawal across two nodes, a search index, a derived summary and a node that is offline or refuses acknowledgement. The interface reports outstanding limitations accurately.

CR-23 | AI review must test influence as well as accuracy (P1)

Source: Ch. 9, decision 62; CH Article IX; OP §11 and T10; PA §10; GF §09; HB §09. **Type:** design risk.

The eight assistance domains and non-authoritative boundaries are consistent across documents. The platform proposes source references, human review and authorization before retrieval. Even without automated publication, AI may anchor participants to its framing, preferentially retrieve dominant traditions, smooth over disagreements in translation, or offer a convincing unsupported interpretation. An AI-off switch alone is not proof of independence.

Proposal: collect independent initial human positions before exposing AI suggestions where feasible. Mark model output and source revisions; distinguish verified citations from generated references; offer alternate formulations and preserve original statements. Test retrieval for omitted objections, false equivalence, minority-language distortion, confidential-data leakage and resistance to untrusted instructions. Keep AI optional, replaceable and disabled for sensitive records unless separately authorized.

Examination: compare otherwise similar inquiries with and without AI assistance. Review fidelity of summaries, changes in positions, workload, unsupported claims and privacy outcomes; do not interpret increased consensus as improved understanding.

CR-24 | The initial product scope exceeds what is needed to test inquiry (P2)

Source: Ch. 15; OP §13; PA §§03, 12–13; HB §11; QB pilot portfolio. **Type:** sequencing risk.

The platform architecture specifies a broad eventual system, including graph, federation, education, AI and community functions. The six-stage implementation sequence appropriately defers some features, but even a local inquiry application may be unnecessary before the actual documentation workflow is understood. Building the full graph and sophisticated federation before testing record semantics risks encoding unexamined assumptions.

Proposal: start with a paper workflow and a small versioned public repository of synthetic or authorized non-sensitive records. Build an import/export adapter only after the record model has been exercised. Add an inquiry workspace if recurring friction justifies it; defer generalized graph ranking, identity federation, AI assistants and demonstration dashboards. Preserve export and versioning from the first implementation to avoid lock-in.

Examination: measure time required to prepare a question, record a dialogue, check its accuracy, export it and continue the next meeting. Let these observations determine the minimum product backlog.

07 / Participation, education and progress

CR-25 | Universal access needs operational accessibility and independent participation (P2)

Source: CH Articles V, VII; Chs. 11, 5; HB §§01–02, 06, 10; QB review section; PA §§02, 07. **Type:** implementation and framing risk.

The documents support open contribution, independent question submissions, offline participation and different languages. A predominantly founder-selected, English-speaking initial group could still shape terminology and priorities before alternative traditions enter. Selection by demon-

strated inquiry ability may inadvertently favor formally trained speakers. Publishing a long corpus does not make it accessible by itself.

Proposal: invite questions from people with different philosophical and educational backgrounds before circulating the bank. Provide a concise introduction, accessible paper forms, plain-language translations and an oral contribution route. Explain selection criteria and allow contributors to challenge translations and records.

Do not conflate ability to articulate in the dominant language with depth of understanding. Keep educational materials distinct from claims of verification.

Examination: ask people unfamiliar with the founders' philosophy to restate the purpose, challenge a question and contribute a record without relying on a founder or specialized software. Record barriers and costs rather than grading participants.

CR-26 | Progress measures need evidence without becoming targets (P2)

Source: Ch. 14; PA §13; GF §12; HB §11; OP §13. **Type:** measurement risk.

The drafts correctly reject engagement, citation, signature and attendance counts as proxies for understanding. But terms such as "clarity gained", "questions advanced" and "independent understanding" are still hard to assess. Measuring the number of resolved contradictions may pressure people to declare closure prematurely; a community may make valuable progress by discovering that an apparently settled claim is unsupported.

Proposal: use a portfolio of bounded observations: whether a person confirms an accurate restatement, whether ambiguity was reduced, whether a credible objection survives documentation, whether an examination pathway is reproducible, whether a learner can explain it independently, and whether an offline record can be corrected and exported. Report counterexamples, failures, costs and uncertainty. Do not combine results into a single score, rank people or claim a causal effect without appropriate evidence.

Examination: compare two consecutive inquiries against their original records and a predeclared rubric; ask an independent reviewer to identify both advances and regressions. Publish a narrative account and actual permitted examples.

08 / Cross-document consistency register

The audit did not establish a fatal contradiction between the seven documents. It did find unresolved tensions that become consequential when text is translated into operational rules. The following register shows what should remain aligned in subsequent revisions.

Requirement	Source of intent	Downstream review target	Finding
Purpose and whole-reality scope	Chs. 1, 2; CH II–III	OP §01; PA §01; HB §01; QB Q019–Q030	Aligned; hypotheses remain open. CR-01.
Individual understanding; no authority over truth	CH IV, VI, IX	OP §§05–06; GF §§01, 04; PA §§05, 09; HB §§04, 06	Aligned in principle; procedural and visibility power remains. CR-02–04, 17.
Four lists; scoped agreement	Chs. 3, 4; CH VIII	OP §§07–08; GF §08; PA §05; HB §§05, 07; QB R/P records	Aligned; subgroup labels, uncertainty and commitments require tests. CR-06–07, 11–14.
Knowledge model and independent examination	Ch. 7	OP §§02–06; PA §§04–06; HB Forms B–F; QB templates	Units carried forward; formal schema and claim-type standards open. CR-02, 09–10.
Freedom to fork and reconnect	Ch. 12; CH X–XII	OP §§10, 12; GF §§05–06; PA §08; HB §09	Aligned; purpose identity and licensing unresolved. CR-15, 19, 21.
Distributed support	Ch. 13; CH X	OP §12; GF §10; PA §12; HB §08	Aligned; actual maintenance and accessibility costs untested. CR-20.
Privacy and correction	CH VII–VIII	OP §§08, 11; GF §09; PA §11; HB Form G	Aligned; retention envelope, cross-node incident and revocation handling incomplete. CR-09, 13, 18, 22.
Integral non-authoritative AI	Ch. 9; CH IX	OP §11; GF §09; PA §10; HB §09	Aligned; AI influence and data-boundary tests needed. CR-23.
Open research agenda and participation	Chs. 3, 11, 12; CH V	OP §04; GF §03; PA §06; HB §§02–03; QB dependency map	Aligned; graph and language bias require testing. CR-08, 25.

Requirement	Source of intent	Downstream review target	Finding
Founding pilot	Ch. 15	OP §13; GF §12; PA §13; HB §11; QB portfolio	Different scales are compatible phases, not inconsistent quotas. CR-24, 26.

Specific drafting harmonization to consider: define cohort agreement versus scoped signatory agreement consistently; separate record type from epistemic assessment; add an explicit unknown or withheld-publication representation; align consent and retention references in envelopes, forms and examples; clarify the relationship between experimental conformance profiles and their test requirements. Preserve the seven statuses and five response options as historical proposed vocabulary while examining these refinements. Do not edit the original 18 questions or twelve candidate restraints without versioning and preserving their original wording.

09 / Proposed resolution gates and responsibilities

The P0 matters should not block publishing a clearly marked founding proposal for examination, provided publishing rights and claims of status are clear. They do block the corresponding unsafe or misleading activity. A gate is a proposed practical safeguard, not a new institutional authority.

Gate	Issues	Evidence before proceeding
G1 / Public draft and contribution route	CR-19	Confirm rights to publish; document draft status, contribution terms, identity, operator and privacy boundary.
G2 / First facilitated inquiry	CR-16	Local operating agreement, consent, review contact, emergency and appeal route; a paper workflow is sufficient.
G3 / Publishing agreements or verification labels	CR-02, 06	Claim-type policy; scoped cohort records; no universal labels; reviewed examples and test T03.
G4 / Inviting conduct undertakings	CR-11, 12, 13	Precisely scoped low-risk candidate, voluntary private choice and withdrawal route; no sensitive living evidence.
G5 / External node exchange	CR-18	Incident and quarantine procedure, named contacts, review route, simulated incidents; synthetic records first.

The eight P0 findings are CR-02, CR-06, CR-11, CR-12, CR-13, CR-16, CR-18 and CR-19. The proposed responsibilities below are temporary functional roles, not permanent appointments: inquiry reviewers for G3; facilitators and a separate consent/safeguarding contact for G2/G4; repository operators and independent reviewers for G5; and the actual rights holders and local legal advisers for G1. People may take more than one role when conflicts are addressed. No person or central body is assigned authority by this report.

Expanded experimental test cases

The OP already proposes T01–T12. Keep them; the following are additional cases, not completed results. Each test report must include exact policy and software version, input, expected behavior, actual result, limitations, reviewer and any unresolved objection.

ID	Test case	Expected observable result
E01	Claim types and evidence (CR-02–04)	Different scoped assessments and contrary findings remain visible; no universal truth badge.
E02	Cohort selection (CR-06–07)	Narrower signatories do not hide wider disagreement, uncertainty or withheld responses.
E03	Translation dispute (CR-10)	Both meanings remain available; no automatic signature transfer.
E04	Refusal and withdrawal (CR-12, 14)	Refusal does not affect inquiry eligibility; current undertaking status changes accurately.
E05	Sensitive evidence (CR-13, 22)	Export and AI context contain no unauthorized private data; limitations of withdrawal are explicit.
E06	Governance deadlock (CR-16–17)	The declared local rule, reviewer and unresolved objection are recorded.
E07	Incident and false report (CR-18)	Local quarantine and appeal are proportionate; no automatic philosophical exclusion.
E08	Fork and identity (CR-15, 19)	Differences, reuse rights and claimed compatibility are transparent.
E09	Malformed and replayed exchange (CR-09, 21)	Validation, conflict and missing-reference states work without corrupting records.
E10	AI-off and framing comparison (CR-23)	Core inquiry works without AI; assisted output preserves source and dissent.
E11	Independent newcomer (CR-25)	An offline or non-specialist participant can contribute and inspect the record.
E12	Progress and cost (CR-20, 24, 26)	Report actual improvements, failures, work and cost without a participant ranking.

10 / A smaller founding experiment

Proposed sequence

The founding proposal suggests an initial 8 to 12 collaborators, followed by 20 to 30 participants and approximately five questions. The protocol proposes two independent communities, and the handbook proposes an eight-week pilot. These are compatible if understood as stages rather than fixed recruitment targets. This review recommends beginning more narrowly, with two independent small groups and two questions, before expanding to the wider proposed portfolio. This change is an experimental recommendation, not an approved replacement for the earlier plan.

Step	Activity	Deliverable and exit criterion
A	Establish founding review repository and consented local process	Rights and contribution terms established; seven draft documents, issue register and local operating agreement accessible.
B	Invite independent questions before circulating the bank	At least two distinct sets of independently submitted questions, plus documented selection grounds.
C	Run first paper inquiries	Original and revised responses, meanings, precise differences, scope and authorized records. No agreement target.
D	Test a narrow verification pathway	Independent examinations with limitations and counterexamples, not a universal claim.
E	Test voluntary procedural commitment	Separate agreement, undertaking and limited implementation observation; private exit route.
F	Test record exchange with synthetic data first	T01–T12 and applicable E-tests first attempted; explicit failures and untested cases.
G	Publish review and revise	Findings, objections, cost and proposed changes traceable to issues and source versions.

For the two initial questions, use Q005 (distinguishing knowledge from belief) and an independently selected question about prosperity or another concrete domain. Q005 is a proposed starting point, not a mandatory agenda. Consider a narrow conduct proposition linked to R05. Contributors should be free to replace these choices. For sensitive or high-risk topics use hypothetical records only. Keep the first iteration small enough to review every record manually.

Criteria for expansion

Advance beyond the pilot only when the relevant gates have evidence of implementation, the test suite reports results honestly, participants can inspect and correct records, divergent methods can be represented without forced equivalence, operators can handle a safety incident and resource responsibilities are sustainable. A failed test should generate a revised design or explicit restriction, not a concealed exception. The existence of a pilot does not validate H1, H2 or universal conduct. A World Assembly should review work already undertaken, rather than substitute attendance and signatures for its results.

11 / Recommended document changes and decision process

Do not silently rewrite the foundational drafts. Publish this review as a separate, open issue register, then invite contributors to examine each issue and propose alternatives. Each issue should have an origin, target document/version, evidence, affected people, possible remedy, objections, test and adoption scope. Accepted changes can be issued as a coordinated revision package with a migration note. Some questions may properly remain open.

Document	Proposed revision focus
FP v0.4	Clarify limits of H1/H2 and normative inquiry; preserve decision history; add bounded pilot gates and source limitations.
CH v0.2	Examine the identity/fork boundary, independence, safeguards and protection mechanism without adding a philosophical doctrine.
OP v0.2	Claim-type assessment, cohort semantics, data dictionary, consent/retention fields, incident and withdrawal behavior, test mapping.
GF v0.2	Pilot operating agreement, independent review, incidents, licensing and role transfer; publish alternate local designs.
PA v0.2	Small initial scope, validated exchange fixtures, access controls and AI influence evaluation.
HB v0.2	Update forms and worked examples; consent, non-retaliation, local agreement and incident drill.
QB v0.2	Invite independently proposed questions, preserve historical wording, clarify dependency types and difficult cases.

The version numbers above are placeholders for possible next editions. No source document has been modified in this review. Changes should be accepted only after the open founding process examines them.

12 / Review closure and next step

The architecture is coherent enough to begin open founding inquiry, provided it is presented as a proposal rather than an already validated system. Its primary unresolved risk is that the institution could unintentionally reproduce the authority, consensus incentives and centralized power it is designed to avoid. That risk is best addressed not by another extensive statement of principles, but by testing specific mechanisms and publishing failures openly.

The next deliverable should be a concise Founding Pilot Plan with a public issue register, responsibilities, staged release gates, two worked inquiries, consent and operational templates, and a conformance test report format. The original seven foundational documents remain drafts. Public communication may proceed as an invitation to examine them once publication rights and status are clear, but should not claim that the protocol is established, the commitments are adopted, or any philosophical hypothesis has been verified.

The findings and recommended remedies in this review are newly proposed analysis. They have not been examined by independent contributors, adopted by the founder, tested in the field or legally reviewed. The absence of a discovered contradiction is not proof that none exists. The audit uses the Markdown source editions, not a separately verified comparison of every Word rendering. The review does not re-check the external organizations cited in Ch. 16; their current practices and legal terms should be examined separately before adopting mechanisms from them.

20 Invitation

This is the closing passage of the Founding Proposal.

The purpose of this document is to make the initiative itself available for collective examination. A contributor may challenge a foundational hypothesis, identify a contradiction in this proposal, improve the methodology, develop an independent implementation, translate an educational pathway, organize a local community or propose a new question. The proposal should be improved through exactly the kind of inquiry it seeks to enable. No one is being asked to endorse a finished institution. We are inviting people to build it together.

Reference

A Open Protocol

Founding draft for collective examination | 24 November 2026

A protocol for collective philosophical inquiry, independent verification, accessible understanding and voluntary human commitments, implementable by independent communities online and offline.

Status and scope

This document translates the Founding Proposal and Foundational Charter into a proposed operational specification. The agreed purpose and freedoms constrain the design. The detailed procedures, record fields, compatibility tests and publication rules below are new working specifications, not collectively adopted standards. No claim of philosophical truth or universal agreement follows from protocol conformance.

The protocol is a public method of cooperation, not a platform, a philosophical doctrine, a central registry, or a legal authority. It must work using paper and ordinary dialogue as well as interoperable software. A community may use only the layers it needs and disclose which profile it implements. No central permission, payment, institutional affiliation or particular AI provider is required to initiate inquiry.

Reading the specification

- **MUST:** proposed minimum rule for claiming conformance to a specified v0.1 profile. It does not bind non-adopting communities.
- **SHOULD:** recommended practice; departures should be explained where relevant.
- **MAY:** optional method or implementation choice.

- **OPEN:** a question not resolved by this draft. A local policy may address it provisionally and must be identifiable as local.

01 / Architecture and design constraints

The protocol serves the permanent purpose of investigating whether universally verifiable understanding of reality is possible, making that understanding accessible to every human being, and examining how humanity can live in accordance with it. Reality in its entirety remains within scope. Common reality and the ultimate resolvability of genuine contradictions remain hypotheses under examination, not prerequisites for participation.

Eight layers

Layer	Proposed function and output
01 Representation	Identify questions, concepts, claims, systems, observations and commitments. Produce linked records.
02 Semantics	Define meanings in context; preserve conceptual and translation differences. Produce definitions and mappings.
03 Dialogue	Facilitate independent positions, mutual comprehension, examination and reassessment. Produce inquiry sessions.
04 Verification	Document pathways, conditions, methods and independent findings. Produce examination records.
05 Documentation	Preserve the four lists, scopes, grounds, provenance, objections and revisions. Produce versioned views.
06 Education	Develop accessible pathways to independent understanding. Produce learning resources and examination activities.
07 Demonstration	Examine claims about living and voluntary undertakings over time. Produce consented evidence and limitations.
08 Governance	Propose, test and improve standards. Produce public proposals, adoption decisions and objections.

Each layer SHOULD be independently implementable. A paper-based study circle can conduct dialogue without running a digital node; a translation project can link its work to records from another community.

Seven design properties

Property	Test of the design
Open	Specifications can be accessed, implemented and improved publicly.

Property	Test of the design
Permission-less	Independent inquiry needs no central authorization.
Interopera-ble	Different implementations can exchange meaningful records without losing their scope.
Traceable	Sources, revisions and grounds can be examined.
Forkable	Communities can adapt the entire institutional architecture.
Non-propri-etary	Shared understanding and the protocol are not exclusively owned.
Durable	Records and methods survive changes in institutions and technology.

02 / Representation and record vocabulary

The ten fundamental units in the Founding Proposal are retained. Implementations MUST distinguish their meanings, even if they use different internal storage structures. A philosophical system can be documented as a whole while its individual propositions remain separately examinable. No contributor is required to accept a whole system in order to examine a claim within it.

Core unit	Minimum subject matter
Question	Wording, importance, unresolved issue and related questions.
Concept	Term, definition, language, context and alternative meanings.
Proposition	Precise claim, scope, assumptions and concept references.
Reasoning	Premises, inference, conclusion and target claim.
Observation	What was observed or experienced, conditions, source and inter-pretation.
Verification path-way	Instructions, prerequisites, possible findings, limits and target ver-sion.
Verification record	Examiner, pathway version, conditions, findings and indepen-dence.
Objection	Target, point of challenge, grounds and proposed examination.
Philosophical system	Context, concepts, propositions, relationships and means of verifi-cation.
Living demon-stration	Claims concerning living, context, evidence, consent and limita-tions.

List Four extensions

Unit	Minimum subject matter
Conduct proposition	Examinable claim about appropriate conduct and its grounds.
Commitment definition	Precise responsibility or restraint, conditions, affected parties and version.
Voluntary undertaking	Actor, definition version, scope, date, grounds and consent.
Implementation or demonstration record	Evidence concerning an undertaking, period, context, provenance and limits.
Review or revision	Target, change, reason, date and any withdrawal or correction.

Supporting operational records

This draft additionally proposes response, session, agreement, list snapshot, educational pathway, protocol proposal and adoption records. These implement the original conceptual units rather than replace them. A record of agreement is not a proposition; a signature or attestation is not verification; an adoption decision is not a philosophical conclusion.

03 / Record envelope, provenance and revision

For exchange, each public record MUST carry enough information to identify exactly what was contributed, by whom or under what authorized attribution, and in which context. The following abstract envelope is transport-neutral. JSON, tabular exports and paper forms may implement it. A final machine-readable schema is OPEN.

Field	Proposed requirement
record_id; revision_id	Stable namespaced logical identifier and immutable identifier for a particular revision.
type; protocol_version	Declared vocabulary type and specification used.
origin; attribution	Origin community or repository and authorized attribution; distinguish human, organization and AI assistance.
created_at; scope	Date with precision and relevant context, population or conditions.
language; content	Original language and type-specific body; retain original text or an authorized reference.

Field	Proposed requirement
links	Typed references to exact target revisions where meaning or evidence depends on them.
provenance	Sources, methods, contribution history and responsible publisher.
access; reuse	Publication permission, access scope, applicable license or reuse restriction.
previous_revision status	Predecessor where applicable; active, superseded, withdrawn or restricted.

Identifiers need not disclose personal identity. A proposed pilot convention is a repository namespace plus a local identifier and revision number. Collision resolution, identifier persistence, cryptographic signatures, timestamp formats and canonical serialization remain OPEN. A digital signature can support origin and integrity, not truth or understanding.

Relationship vocabulary

Records SHOULD support explicit relations such as supports, contradicts, depends_on, clarifies, translates, tests, revises, agrees_with, undertakes, examines_implementation_of, challenges and withdraws. A link is a claim by its author, not an automatically established relation. It can itself be challenged, scoped and revised.

Versioning

A changed definition or proposition MUST receive a new revision. Previous agreements, undertakings and verification records continue to refer to the version actually examined. Corrections must not silently transfer signatures or evidence to another meaning. Where permitted, preserve the previous revision and reason for change. Privacy restrictions may require redaction or withdrawal instead of indefinite public retention. A receiving node must not interpret missing or restricted material as an admission or refutation.

04 / Semantics and question architecture

Clarifying meaning

Before recording substantive agreement or disagreement, participants SHOULD identify whether they understand the same proposition in the same relevant sense. Preserve original-language wording, definitions, context and any translator's notes. A term may have no direct equivalent in another language; the protocol MUST permit this to be recorded rather than force an equivalence.

A semantic mapping SHOULD identify the source and target revisions, mapping author, relation (equivalent in stated context, narrower, broader, overlapping, uncertain or incompatible), grounds, limitations and review status. These mapping labels are provisional. No translation automatically inherits signatures. A participant may confirm that a translated version preserves the proposition they examined, or ask for clarification.

Question admission and dependencies

Anyone MAY create a question or initiate an inquiry. A question record SHOULD state what is unclear, why it matters, relevant existing work, possible investigation and proposed dependencies. A community may merge discovery views of similar questions but MUST preserve original records and differences. A dependency between questions is itself an examinable proposition.

For example, a contributor might propose that a definition of prosperity depends on understanding human material needs. Another may challenge that dependency. The graph represents both positions with their grounds, rather than asserting a universal ordering. Cycles and alternative dependency structures are permitted and may reveal further questions.

Prioritization without assignment

Criterion from the founding proposal	Information to provide
Foundational significance	Which other questions may depend on resolution?
Universal relevance	Who is affected, and in what sense?

Criterion from the founding proposal	Information to provide
Consequence for living	What could change in living or institutions?
Present understanding	What has already been examined or remains unclear?
Possibility of investigation	What methods, evidence or collaborators could advance it?

The network SHOULD expose existing investigations and unmet needs, not rank people or prescribe research priorities. Communities may maintain different priorities. Immediate practical urgency and foundational significance are distinct. A question need not score highly to be admissible.

05 / Dialogue and participation

A participant speaks in an individual capacity, even when nominated or funded by an institution. Eligibility to contribute is open; practical assembly capacity and safety may require transparent selection or facilitation. Presenting, examining, facilitating and documenting are functional responsibilities, not ranks of understanding.

Seven-stage dialogue procedure

Stage	Action and proposed record
1 Independent position	Present the precise version and obtain independent initial responses and grounds before group discussion.
2 Mutual comprehension	Participants restate one another's positions; record confirmation or remaining misunderstandings.
3 Differences	Locate disagreement in concepts, premises, observations, inference or conclusions.
4 Foundations	Examine assumptions, definitions, evidence and methods supporting each position.
5 Collective examination	Investigate suitable pathways; record attempts, contrary findings and missing evidence.
6 Independent reassessment	Invite each participant to revise or retain their response and explain why.
7 Documentation	Record scope, changes, unresolved objections, next questions and linked list entries.

Response vocabulary

Response	Meaning
Yes	I accept the precisely stated proposition.
No	I reject the precisely stated proposition.
Undetermined	I have not reached a conclusion.
Conditional	My answer depends on stated conditions.
Needs clarification	I cannot evaluate the current wording as sufficiently clear.

Non-response or absence MUST be recorded separately from these five answers. No silence or conditional answer may be counted as assent to an unconditional proposition. A conditional answer may motivate a separate, precisely qualified proposition. Initial positions may remain private until a participant authorizes release. A response record specifies participant, proposition revision, response, grounds, date, stage and consent for publication.

A session record SHOULD identify the inquiry, participants and roles, applicable method version, proposition versions, declared scope, materials, challenges, reassessments, unresolved matters and authorized publication. Dialogue may continue across years. Facilitators must not compel consensus or closure. No participant has a duty to defend their original view.

06 / Verification and epistemic status

The protocol records how a person independently examines a claim, not merely whether a person says it is true. Methods and evidentiary thresholds remain subject to examination. A claim may be investigated using more than one suitable method.

Method	Distinctions that must be recorded
Empirical observation	Observation, conditions and inference.
Logical reasoning	Premises, inference and validity; coherence is not proof of premises.
Experimentation	Procedure, conditions, results and contrary findings.
Self-observation	Reported experience, interpretation and independent accessibility.
Interpersonal verification	Independent examination rather than repetition or deference.

Method	Distinctions that must be recorded
Lived demonstration	Conduct over time, context, consent and limits.

A pathway SHOULD state the claimed understanding, grounds, how it was reached, repeatable examination steps, prerequisites, conditions, expected and contrary findings, safety constraints and limitations. It should be communicable, examinable, consistent, independently verifiable, open to challenge and applicable to living where relevant. A verification record MUST identify the exact pathway and proposition versions, examiner's role and dependencies, procedure followed or deviations, observations, interpretation, contrary results, conclusion and limitations. Outcomes may support, challenge, remain inconclusive, or reveal a defect in the method. No numerical count alone establishes sufficient verification.

Seven proposed epistemic classifications

Classification	Scope
Question	Investigation identified.
Hypothesis	Possible explanation awaiting examination.
Articulated understanding	Claimed understanding with grounds.
Examinable understanding	Documented pathway available for assessment.
Independently verified	Independent reports under documented methods, subject to examination.
Universally verifiable	Proposed sufficient grounds for universal accessibility in principle.
Challenged	Substantive contrary observation or objection.

These are not linear stages or global truth labels. A challenge may coexist with previous verification records. An implementation MUST disclose who assigned a label, under which policy, to what version and scope, and on what grounds. Until verification thresholds have been examined and adopted locally, report the available records rather than present a definitive epistemic verdict.

Resolution is distinct from linguistic clarity, intellectual agreement, shared understanding and universal verifiability. A claimed resolution requires

independent verification and a stated scope; its sufficiency remains open to challenge.

07 / Documentation and the four lists

The four lists are distinct views of linked records, not mutually exclusive categories. Each published list snapshot MUST identify its authoring community or group, time, policy and protocol version, exact record revisions, scope and any unresolved limitations. No snapshot speaks for all humanity.

List	Proposed rule for inclusion and display
01 Agreement	Unanimous acceptance by an explicitly defined participating signatory group of a precise version. Publish scope, names or authorized identifiers, individual grounds, verification status and any dissent outside the scope.
02 Disagreement	Identify incompatible positions on the same question or claim, their grounds, assumptions and precise point of difference. Distinguish genuine contradiction, semantic difference and uncertainty.
03 Inquiry	Identify a question for further understanding, its significance, proposed dependencies, existing investigations, possible methods and open obstacles.
04 Commitment	Identify a candidate or shared responsibility or restraint and show its exact definition, scope, grounds, objections, undertaking and evidence status separately. No final admission threshold is adopted by this draft.

Proposed List One calculation

Before collecting responses, declare the participant scope and version under examination. An agreement claim about that scope requires every included signatory to have explicitly accepted that version; the scope must not conceal the presence of known dissenting or unresponsive participants in the broader session. Show the assent count, eligible scope, non-responses, conditional responses and known contrary positions separately where disclosure is authorized. If eight of ten participants assent, do not describe it as unanimous agreement of ten. A narrower signed agreement may be shown only with a clear label identifying its eight signatories and the broader disagreement.

Updates, challenges and overlapping views

When a participant changes position, a proposition is revised, or an objection arrives, create a new dated view and link the earlier one. A historical agreement may remain an accurate account of that date even if current agreement no longer holds. A new participant is not automatically included in an old scope. A disagreement may appear on List Two and List Three; a conduct proposition may have grounds debated in Lists One through Three while voluntary undertakings are recorded in List Four. A fork may derive different scoped views from shared records. Do not silently combine incompatible meanings or policies.

08 / Commitment and restraint lifecycle

List Four connects understanding with voluntary responsibility and restraint: what participants will do and what they will not do. It does not impose a global ethical code, and no candidate commitment is ratified merely by appearing in a question bank. The relationship between descriptions of reality and normative conclusions remains a research question.

Four distinct achievements

Achievement	Record
Understanding	A person's account of why a proposition holds and how it may be examined.
Agreement	Acceptance of a precisely stated conduct proposition.
Commitment	Explicit voluntary undertaking to act or refrain within a defined scope.
Demonstration	Examinable evidence concerning actual conduct, with time, context and limits.

Proposed seven-step lifecycle

1. Formulate a candidate conduct proposition and its significance. Mark it as a candidate, not a human commitment already adopted.
2. Define terms, intended conduct, affected parties, circumstances, scope, difficult cases and possible exceptions.

3. Collect independent responses and grounds; examine objections through the dialogue protocol.
4. Document scoped agreement and unresolved differences without conflating either with an undertaking. Preserve different philosophical grounds.
5. Invite explicit, version-specific voluntary undertakings. The person or community specifies what it actually accepts responsibility for, the period or conditions and its grounds.
6. Develop an appropriate, consented examination pathway for conduct; collect only necessary evidence and distinguish self-report from independent observation.
7. Review implementation and contrary findings, revise or withdraw undertakings, and link changes to original versions. A new definition requires renewed assent and undertaking.

A commitment definition MUST identify whether it concerns responsibility, restraint or both. An undertaking MUST identify its actor, version, scope, date and voluntary consent. Demonstration records MUST not be represented as a verdict on a person's worth, overall understanding or private life. Organizational commitments describe organizational responsibilities; they do not establish the individual consent or understanding of employees or members.

The proposed Declaration of Human Commitments is a versioned expression of List Four. Each edition identifies actual signatories and linked reasoning, objections, implementation findings and unresolved questions. Declining to sign is not evidence of opposition or lack of understanding. The minimum threshold for publication as a shared commitment and the standards of demonstration remain OPEN.

09 / Education and living demonstration

Education layer

The permanent responsibility is to make understanding progressively accessible to every human being, not merely to publish conclusions. An educational pathway SHOULD link to a question, proposition or system revision, state learning aims and prerequisites, explain relevant concepts in context, provide activities for examination, identify sources and limitations, and permit learners to record their own conclusions. It should distinguish learning about a philosophical system from independently verifying its claims.

Materials SHOULD support different languages, levels of complexity and accessible formats. Preserve the original meaning while adapting explanations. A learner may challenge a pathway or propose a better one. Completion of a course or agreement with an educator MUST NOT be presented as proof of understanding. The record may document independent explanation, examination and application with the learner's consent. Educational resources and shared verification pathways should be freely accessible, without mandatory fees for access to the common knowledge infrastructure.

Demonstration layer

Where an understanding makes claims about human living, its examination remains incomplete until its implications have also been examined through living. The Founding Proposal identifies seven domains: individual human living; family and relationships; education; production and exchange; society and governance; humanity's relationship with nature; science and technology.

A living demonstration SHOULD define the claim and observable implications, the relevant context and period, who is affected, an appropriate examination method, consent and safety arrangements, and limitations on publication. Distinguish self-report, observed conduct, independent examination and interpretation. Record partial fulfilment, contrary evidence,

alternative explanations and factors outside the person's control. Avoid treating a short observation as evidence of a lifetime achievement or a universal claim.

The examination must be voluntary and proportionate. Private family life, health, personal finances and other sensitive contexts are not public research material merely because they may be relevant. In settings with unequal power, consider whether consent can actually be freely given. No pathway should require exposure to harm, coercion or deprivation. Participation may be stopped without a philosophical penalty.

The findings feed back into the question graph: a failed prediction may challenge a proposition, reveal unsuitable conditions, or motivate a different verification pathway. No failure automatically settles which explanation is correct.

10 / Federation, identity and interoperability

Each community may maintain independent records and adopt compatible standards without surrendering its infrastructure, research agenda or governance. A shared global knowledge graph is a discoverable network of records, not a single authoritative editor. The first reference platform is one implementation, not the definition of the protocol.

Proposed minimal exchange procedure

1. Publish a capability statement naming supported protocol versions, record types, access policies and optional extensions.
2. Export only authorized records with their envelopes, exact versions, typed links, provenance and declared reuse permissions. Paper records may be transcribed or referenced with consent.
3. A receiving implementation validates required fields, records origin and checks permissions. It retains unfamiliar extensions or explicitly reports that it cannot interpret them.

4. Import by revision identifier without overwriting an independently maintained record. Keep conflicting assertions and their sources separately; flag identifier collisions for examination.
5. Resolve linked references when available. Mark missing, restricted or unrecognized targets rather than invent content. Compute local list views under a disclosed policy.
6. Propagate permitted corrections, withdrawals and restriction notices. Record acknowledgement or failure; do not promise deletion from every independent copy.

Independence and reconnection

Implementations MAY diverge in methodology or schema. They SHOULD publish differences and mappings between versions, retain origin references and support exchange where meaning can be preserved. Forking does not require organizational permission, and reconnection does not require merging organizations. Compatibility is a testable statement about specific capabilities, not institutional endorsement or philosophical correctness.

Transport and identity decisions still open

This draft intentionally specifies no blockchain, consensus algorithm, central identity provider, transport protocol, database, hosting service or cryptographic standard. A pilot may use local identifiers and portable UTF-8 JSON or tabular files; a production format must be separately proposed and tested. Authentication, authorization, key rotation, namespace discovery, synchronization, conflict handling and interoperability security remain OPEN. Implementations should make any local choices explicit and avoid declaring universal compatibility without evidence.

11 / Consent, safety and AI

Publication and access

Open software, methodology, governance decisions, research and shared knowledge are central to the initiative. Openness is not a requirement to

publish all human experiences. The protocol MUST distinguish publication consent from participation consent and from consent to reuse or replicate. Records should declare access scope (public, restricted or private), permitted uses, relevant license or restrictions and applicable retention policy. These are pilot categories; actual privacy and licensing arrangements require review.

Sensitive evidence SHOULD remain local where possible; publish an authorized summary or reference only when it can be examined without exposing unnecessary information. Maintain a way to request correction, restriction or withdrawal. Preserve non-sensitive provenance where permitted. A receiving node must honor applicable access restrictions, communicate deletion or correction requests, and make limits of control over distributed copies clear before publication. Never claim perfect revocation from a federated public network.

Community integrity

Permissionless contribution does not guarantee inclusion in every public view. Communities may use transparent, appealable moderation to prevent harassment, coercion, spam, impersonation, fabricated evidence and unsafe disclosure. Separate procedural moderation from philosophical disagreement; an unpopular proposition is not misconduct merely because it is unpopular. Document policy versions, decisions and grounds, with redaction where necessary. Escalation and appeal procedures must be designed locally and remain open to examination.

AI as an integral, non-authoritative layer

AI MAY assist mapping questions, detecting possible contradictions, translation, collective memory, dialogue, education, verification design and coordination. It may also help locate relevant commitments or compare formulations. AI-generated summaries, semantic mappings, proposed evidence and inferences MUST be identifiable as AI-assisted where material. Human contributors remain responsible for checking the original sources,

confirming representations of their positions and verifying claims independently.

AI MUST NOT sign commitments for people, declare global consensus, infer understanding or moral worth from activity, fabricate verification, silently resolve objections, or substitute generated interpretations for primary records. Automated detection is a proposal for examination, not a verdict. Communities remain free to choose models or to operate without AI. Confidential records must not be sent to AI services without appropriate authorization and safeguards.

12 / Protocol governance and continuity

The protocol itself is the first continuing subject of open-source inquiry. Foundational purpose is distinct from examinable hypotheses and evolving methods. No founder, donor, institution or implementation has exclusive authority over the future of the initiative. Governance of technical and procedural standards is not governance of truth.

Proposed change process

Stage	Required public record, subject to privacy
1 Submit	Any contributor may propose a change; identify current specification and affected layers.
2 Describe	Problem, proposed design, reasons, alternatives, expected impacts and compatibility risks.
3 Examine	Independent review, affected parties, questions and relevant evidence.
4 Challenge	Substantive objections, responses and remaining disagreements.
5 Test	Alternative implementations or trials, procedures, findings and limits.
6 Adopt locally	Responsible community, version, scope, rationale, transition plan and adoption decision.
7 Preserve	Prior specifications, unresolved objections, dissenting implementations and routes to reconsideration.

A protocol proposal SHOULD include an identifier, authorship, date, affected versions, definitions of changes, migration plan, test cases and unresolved questions. Proposed states are draft, under examination, experimental, adopted by a named implementation, superseded or withdrawn.

No local adoption creates a global obligation. A proposal may be implemented as a fork before collective adoption.

Operational decisions may require deadlines or delegated authority. Exact governance thresholds, contributor responsibilities, appeal processes, compatibility review and release maintenance remain OPEN and are to be developed in the Governance Framework. The protocol requires their decisions to be identifiable and examinable, not unanimous truth declarations.

Sustaining the common infrastructure

Independent communities sustain their own work and may voluntarily contribute resources to shared needs. Access to shared knowledge and independent inquiry must not depend on mandatory payments or philosophical allegiance. Transparent financial arrangements, compensation and funding conflicts should be documented separately from epistemic decisions. Openness extends to software, knowledge, methodology, governance, financial records, educational resources, assembly formats, research and institutional development, subject to legitimate privacy and rights.

13 / Pilot and conformance tests

A first test should be small enough to learn from actual use. Proposed experimental scope: two independent communities, one offline-first and one digital, each examining a shared proposition and a candidate conduct commitment. Contributors select the questions voluntarily. The pilot is not a certification system or a prerequisite for participation.

Proposed conformance profiles

Profile	Minimum scope of claimed compatibility
Inquiry	Representation, semantics, dialogue and documented responses with versioned scope.
Verification	Pathways and independent examination records with methods, findings and limitations.

Profile	Minimum scope of claimed compatibility
Four-list publication	List rules, scoped agreement, questions, voluntary undertakings and review status.
Federated exchange	Portable record envelopes, import/export, preserved provenance and restriction handling.

An implementation declares the profiles, version and tests it has actually completed; it must not claim conformance to unimplemented layers. The profiles are experimental and not a centrally administered credential.

Test	Proposed pass condition
T01 Meaning	Two ambiguous terms remain distinguishable after exchange.
T02 Independent response	Initial response and reassessment remain separate.
T03 Scope	Partial assent cannot be displayed as unanimous assent of the whole group.
T04 Revision	An edit does not transfer earlier signatures or verification.
T05 Challenge	Contrary findings survive export and appear alongside supporting records.
T06 Commitment	Agreement, undertaking and evidence remain distinct.
T07 Consent	Restricted living evidence is excluded from public export.
T08 Federation	Two independent implementations import linked records without losing origin or scope.
T09 Fork	A differing local policy is identifiable and its records remain discoverable.
T10 AI	An AI-generated interpretation is identifiable and cannot create human assent.
T11 Accessibility	An offline participant can contribute through a consented transcription and inspect the result.
T12 Withdrawal	A correction or restriction notice is transmitted and acknowledged without silently rewriting history.

These are proposed tests, not executed results. Pilot reports should include failures, corrective proposals, effort required, clarity gained and effects on participants. Avoid treating number of signatures or time spent on the platform as success.

14 / Worked inquiry and exchange example

Illustrative only. All identifiers, participants and responses below are fictional; no finding or commitment is being claimed on behalf of anyone.

Question Q1: What constitutes prosperity? Proposition P1 revision 1: Financial wealth alone is insufficient to measure human prosperity. Definitions of prosperity and measure are linked to concept records. A proposes that relationships matter; B accepts for reasons involving human capabilities; C requests clarification about whether prosperity means material sufficiency or overall well-being. The facilitator records distinct meanings and proposes a revised definition, without transferring earlier answers.

Record	Illustrative content
P1@1	Original proposition; three participating persons.
R1, R2	A and B respond Yes, with different grounds.
R3	C responds Needs clarification; no rejection inferred.
A1	Scoped agreement of A and B only; broader session includes C. Not verified.
Q2	Clarify the meaning of prosperity; linked to Q1 on List Three.
O1	Challenge: different definitions may alter the claim.
P1@2	Revised version, requiring new responses.
C1@1	Candidate restraint: We will not knowingly misrepresent another person's stated position in this inquiry.
U1	A voluntarily undertakes C1@1 for the inquiry session. B agrees but has not undertaken it.
D1	A consented example of a corrected summary; limited observation, not proof of sustained conduct.

Abstract interchange example

The syntax below is illustrative, not a ratified wire format. The IDs have only local pilot meaning.

```
{
    "record_id": "example.local/U1",
    "revision_id": "example.local/U1@1",
    "type": "voluntary_undertaking", "protocol_version": "0.1",
    "origin": "example.local", "attribution": "fictional-A",
    "created_at": "2026-11-24", "scope": "illustrative session",
    "language": "en", "content": {"definition": "example.local/
C1@1",
      "grounds": "avoid misrepresentation", "voluntary": true},
    "links": [{"rel": "undertakes", "target": "example.local/
C1@1"}],
    "provenance": "fictional example", "access": "public",
    "reuse": "illustrative only", "previous_revision": null,
```

```
    "status": "active"
}
```

A second repository can import the definition and undertaking, preserve their origin, and publish its own response or objection. It must not turn the undertaking into a claim of verified conduct. If no conduct examination has occurred, say so.

15 / Unresolved specifications

Unresolved specification register

- Epistemic: sufficient evidence across claim types; universality, resolution, challenge handling and criteria against the founding hypotheses.
- Semantics: equivalence across languages, concept identity and semantic mapping validation.
- Lists: scope of unanimity; assent withdrawal; commitment inclusion, positive responsibilities, difficult cases, evidence sufficiency and the declaration's maintenance.
- Technical: schema, transport, identity, signatures, federation, synchronization, extensions, security, migration and long-term preservation.
- Institutional: compatibility assessment without capture; decision thresholds, appeals, legal arrangements, licenses, resource support and K4M2A's role.
- Human safeguards: consent, privacy, withdrawal across replicas, safe demonstration, accessibility, moderation and assessment of AI outputs.

Release recommendation: Publish v0.1 as an experimental founding proposal, solicit objections and use real pilot inquiries to revise it. The record schema, conformance profiles, exchange workflow, response calculations, moderation and evidence procedures are drafting choices, not accepted decisions. No external technical standard has been selected or tested.

B Governance Framework

Founding draft for collective examination | 24 November 2026

Purpose of this framework

The Fourth List is a global endeavour supported by independent organizations, not an organization seeking global participation. Its governance must enable people to examine reality together, maintain shared infrastructure and fulfil practical responsibilities without transferring authority over understanding or truth to any institution.

This framework translates the Founding Proposal, Foundational Charter and Open Protocol into a proposed model of federated, contribution-based governance. It covers online and offline communities, protocol maintenance, assemblies, resources, accountability and succession. It is neither a legal constitution nor a ratified global governance policy.

How to read this document

- **Foundational direction:** a commitment already accepted in the founding dialogue or explicitly identified as such in the preceding documents.
- **Working design:** a proposed mechanism for realizing that direction, open to collective examination and local experimentation.
- **Open decision:** a question not yet settled by the founding dialogue. A proposed pilot mechanism does not ratify an answer.

All procedures below are working designs unless expressly identified as foundational directions. No global body, officeholder, mandatory funding arrangement, binding decision threshold or legal entity is established by this draft.

01 / Governing principles and boundaries

Foundational direction. The permanent purpose is to investigate whether a universally verifiable understanding of reality is possible, make that understanding accessible to every human being, and examine how humanity can live in accordance with it. The two hypotheses concerning common reality and the resolvability of genuine contradictions remain examinable. Governance must protect the inquiry, not its anticipated findings.

Six safeguards of institutional independence

Safeguard	Governance consequence
Philosophical independence	No tradition, founder or doctrine has privileged status.
Financial independence	Financial contributions purchase no authority over conclusions.
Intellectual independence	Every person may examine and challenge propositions.
Procedural transparency	Decisions, scope, methods and grounds are examinable, subject to privacy.
Institutional accountability	Governance itself can be questioned, reviewed and improved.
Intergenerational continuity	The endeavour must not depend on particular founders or organizations.

Three distinct functions

Function	Responsibility and boundary
Administration	Manage resources, operations, infrastructure and events; cannot determine philosophical validity.
Methodology	Maintain and test procedural standards; may evaluate record conformance, not another person's understanding.
Inquiry	Independently examine reality and document findings; philosophical contribution confers no administrative entitlement.

One person may carry multiple functions in a small community, but must identify the capacity in which each decision is made and recuse themselves when independence is compromised. Shared infrastructure can be governed; reality cannot be governed. No vote, declaration, rank, technical permission or financial arrangement can establish truth.

The limits of collective decisions

A community can decide what software to operate, how to spend its resources, how to organize a meeting or which protocol version to adopt. It cannot determine what a person understands, require a person to assent to a philosophical proposition, or declare that an unexamined claim has been verified. An operational decision is attributable to the people and scope for which it was made. No decision binds unrelated communities simply because it is published.

02 / Federated institutional architecture

Foundational direction. The initiative is defined by its purpose and open protocol, not a particular legal entity, website, membership or governing body. Independent communities maintain their own records while collectively advancing a shared architecture of human understanding.

Proposed allocation of responsibility

Unit	Responsibilities and limits
Individual contributor	Own questions, reasoning, responses and verification; may initiate inquiries without permission.
Local community	Organize local dialogue, education, living demonstrations, conduct policy and resources; adopt local procedures.
Independent project or working group	Maintain its scope, contribution process, evidence and deliverables; cannot assign a global research agenda.
Platform operator	Operate an implementation, enforce access and safety rules, preserve provenance and enable exchange.
Protocol maintainers	Maintain particular versions or reference implementations, coordinate proposals and publish test results.
Assembly organizers	Facilitate meetings and document scoped outcomes; cannot speak for absent people or humanity.
Supporting organization	Hold assets, contract, fund work or supply services within its own legal responsibilities.

These are functional units, not tiers in a chain of command. A community may operate a platform or several projects; a project may involve several communities; an assembly may be jointly organized. The Charter sets a common purpose, the Protocol defines interoperable practices, and each

participating unit publishes its own arrangements. No central office needs to approve the existence of a local group.

Coordination without a global executive

Proposed cross-community coordination consists of open working groups and time-bounded coordination circles for specific shared tasks. A circle might maintain a test suite, coordinate translation or arrange a regional assembly. Its mandate identifies participants, deliverables, resources, decision scope, review date and exit arrangements. Any delegate coordinates on behalf of a consenting community only for that task, not as a representative of its members' philosophical views.

Coordination circles do not gain permanent authority through longevity or size. A shared service can be maintained by multiple groups, with documented alternatives and portable records. Communities may choose not to participate and still contribute to the inquiry. A central directory, website or reference repository is a convenience, not the source of legitimacy.

03 / Participation and assignment of responsibility

Foundational direction. Individual understanding, rather than institutional representation, is the basis of philosophical participation. Every human being is eligible to contribute. Membership or credentials cannot establish understanding.

Association	Scope
Public	Access, study, challenge and examine public records.
Participants	Contribute questions, arguments, translations, verification and other work.
Members	Voluntarily assume continuing responsibilities within a specific community or organization.
Officeholders	Hold a defined, reviewable operational or methodological mandate.

Presenting, examining, facilitating and documenting are inquiry functions, not permanent ranks. Selection for capacity-limited assemblies or specialized tasks may consider demonstrated preparedness, clarity of reasoning,

ability to comprehend other views and ability to examine one's assumptions. Academic credentials are supporting evidence only. Publish selection criteria, capacity, accessibility support and reasons for selection or non-selection; provide other routes for contribution.

Proposed responsibility lifecycle

1. Publish the need, scope, required capacities, expected work, constraints and any compensation.
2. Invite voluntary expressions of interest and evidence of relevant contributions or capabilities; allow newcomers to undertake supervised or bounded tasks.
3. Have disinterested contributors examine suitability, conflicts and availability. Record the selection and grounds, with consent and appropriate privacy.
4. Publish the mandate, decision rights, limits, duration or review date, supporting resources, reporting obligations and handover expectations.
5. Review delivery, conduct and continued suitability against the mandate. Provide feedback and an opportunity to respond.
6. Renew, revise, relinquish or end the mandate through a documented process. Transfer access, records and obligations to the next responsible person where authorized.

Contribution-based responsibility must not become an accumulation of votes, a reputation score or a hereditary position. No person earns authority over truth by contributing more. A contributor may leave a role without surrendering their right to participate; communities should prevent lock-in through credentials, keys, knowledge or contracts.

Open working groups

The ten proposed functional areas remain Philosophy, Methodology, Technology, Education, Languages, Living, Communities, Assemblies, Governance and Resources. They are independently initiable projects or collaboration areas rather than compulsory departments. Groups may

divide, merge, conclude or reconnect. They should publish their scope, maintainers, contribution route and dependencies; research direction emerges through the network's interconnected questions, not assignments from a governing body.

04 / Decision rights and practical resolution

Governance by documented resolution is a proposed way of making collective decisions examinable. It should not require every operational action to await universal philosophical agreement. The proposal combines contribution-based responsibility with federated coordination, avoiding the concentration of founder-led authority, the equation of popularity with correctness and the fragmentation of completely isolated work.

Proposed decision classes

Class	Decision holder and procedure
Individual inquiry or assent	The individual; no delegate may sign or verify on their behalf.
Routine operational action	Named mandate holder within published scope and resource limits.
Local policy or resource change	The community's disclosed local process, after affected-party consultation.
Shared project or protocol adoption	Consenting participants or implementation operators within their respective mandates.
Charter or purpose interpretation	Open examination and documented positions; no global authority to impose a reinterpretation.
Urgent protective action	Authorized local operator acts narrowly to prevent harm, then submits to timely independent review.

Proposed decision procedure

1. Identify the problem, responsible unit, decision class, affected parties, constraints, deadline and reversibility.
2. Publish alternatives, grounds, anticipated costs, conflicts and proposed action; provide an accessible review period proportionate to impact.
3. Seek mutual comprehension, investigate substantive objections, test alternatives where appropriate and record remaining differences.

4. Distinguish agreement from an absence of response. Do not describe a decision as unanimous if eligible participants have not assented within the stated scope.
5. The authorized unit decides under its disclosed local procedure, publishes its reasons, dissent, scope, review date and conditions for reconsideration.

Deadlocks and deadlines

Seek reasoned resolution first. If an operational decision cannot wait, the responsible unit may defer, narrow the scope, use a reversible trial, split implementations or apply a previously disclosed local fallback rule. A vote may select a practical course of action but cannot verify a proposition. Affected communities are free to decline adoption. Where irreversible expenditure, rights or safety are involved, obtain the necessary local authorizations and review rather than treating urgency as unlimited discretion.

Exact thresholds, quorum, time windows and delegation limits are open decisions. During a pilot, each group must record its chosen local rule before applying it; no single threshold is proposed as a global obligation. Preserve unresolved objections so that practical closure is not mistaken for resolution of the underlying question.

05 / Protocol evolution and releases

The Open Protocol defines eight layers and seven design properties. Its governance is itself a continuing open-source project. Any contributor can propose an improvement to any layer. A maintainer's decision to publish a version is not a determination of truth or a compulsory upgrade.

Seven-stage change process (from the Open Protocol)

Stage	Record and accountability
1. Submit	Identifier, authorship, affected version and layers; public contribution route.
2. Describe	Problem, design, grounds, alternatives, risks, compatibility and migration.
3. Examine	Independent review and effects on contributors and communities.

Stage	Record and accountability
4. Challenge	Substantive objections, responses, dissent and unresolved questions.
5. Test	Trial implementations, test cases, results, failures and limitations.
6. Adopt locally	Named adopter, version, scope, reasons, transition and rollback.
7. Preserve	Earlier versions, objections, alternative implementations and reconsideration routes.

Proposed states: draft, under examination, experimental, adopted by a named implementation, superseded or withdrawn. Different implementations may adopt different versions concurrently. No local adoption creates a global obligation.

Reference release maintenance (working design)

A willing maintainer group publishes its mandate, contribution rules, repository, release history and test suite. Maintain a public change log and migration notes. Document which independent implementations were tested; where possible invite at least one reviewer not responsible for the original change. Where a proposal is rejected or delayed, give reasons and retain a route to reconsideration or independent implementation. Release numbering, security patching and deprecation policy are open specifications to be tested.

Distinguish editorial corrections, compatible extensions and changes that break existing exchange or alter the meaning of records. A breaking change should carry a new version identifier and migration plan, preserve the old meaning and avoid automatically inheriting assent or verification. An urgent security patch may use an abbreviated local process with later disclosure that does not expose exploitable details. Maintainers must be replaceable and repositories exportable subject to rights and privacy. Multiple reference implementations can coexist.

06 / Identity, compatibility, forks and reconnection

Foundational direction. Freedom to fork extends to the entire institutional architecture, including software, methodology, governance frame-

works, educational resources and assembly formats. A community may independently develop the openly licensed resources without founder permission, subject to licenses, attribution, consent and privacy. Reconnection need not require organizational merger.

Identity and compatibility

Organizational affiliation creates dependency; technical compatibility alone does not protect purpose; a foundational charter requires examinable commitments. The proposed approach combines publicly stated purpose with demonstrable protocol compatibility. Communities can self-describe their purpose and disclose their implementation, version and differences. A directory may publish entries under transparent criteria and offer correction or appeal. Directory exclusion does not prevent independent inquiry or lawful reuse.

Use the four experimental profiles in the Open Protocol: Inquiry, Verification, Four-list publication and Federated exchange. Claims of compatibility identify actual capabilities, versions, tests and results, including known failures. Independent reviewers may replicate tests and publish contrary findings. No certificate, central membership registry or self-assertion establishes philosophical validity. There is no ratified compatibility authority.

Proposed fork and reconnect procedure

1. State the fork's origin, version, purpose, changes, rationale and licenses. Copy only materials permitted for reuse, never restricted human evidence merely because it exists in a repository.
2. Publish changed procedures and record formats, compatibility limitations, attribution and distinct identity. Preserve historical context where allowed.
3. Maintain independent operations and responsibilities, including any liabilities or contractual commitments that cannot lawfully be transferred.

4. Discover and compare changes through shared indexes, public specifications and test cases. Enable compatible exchange without compulsory integration.
5. If groups wish to reconnect, examine semantic and procedural differences; test mappings, migration, consent and provenance. Obtain explicit local adoption and preserve dissent. Never merge signatures, verification statuses or private records by default.

Naming and trademarks require separate legal and community examination. The right to reuse open materials does not imply a right to falsely claim another group's endorsement or to represent humanity. A community that departs from the common purpose should transparently identify the difference; it remains free to pursue lawful independent work. The means of protecting identity must not undermine the substantive freedom to fork.

07 / Accountability, conflicts and appeals

Governance is examinable only when responsibilities, decisions and remedies are visible. The following proposed process applies to local administration, methodology, compatibility review and shared projects, not to the truth of philosophical conclusions.

Accountability record

Each role should have a published mandate and review date. Each material decision should state who made it, under what authority, who was affected, alternatives, grounds, relevant conflicts, unresolved objections and next review. Publish a redacted record when safety or confidentiality prevents full disclosure. Maintain accessible routes to raise questions about any decision.

Conflicts of interest

Disclose material financial, personal, employment, organizational or authorship interests that could affect a procedural decision. Holding a philosophical position is not by itself misconduct or a reason to bar a contributor from inquiry. When a person reviews their own eligibility, compensation,

moderation action, compatibility claim or disputed conduct, they should not be the sole decision maker. Arrange independent review, record recusal and identify substitute responsibility. Gifts, sponsorship and funding conditions cannot purchase influence over philosophical outcomes.

Proposed review and appeal pathway

1. Request clarification or correction from the responsible unit, with the decision identifier and grounds.
2. If unresolved, request review by a person or small group not materially involved in the original action. Where local independence is unavailable, invite mutually acceptable external reviewers.
3. Provide notice and a fair opportunity to respond, taking safety and privacy into account; examine the applicable published rule, evidence, process and proportionality.
4. Publish an appropriately redacted finding and remedy: affirm, correct, reverse, remand, narrow or replace a procedural decision. Explain limits and remaining objections.
5. Allow further review under a disclosed local rule. Cross-community mediation is voluntary; no universal tribunal or compulsory jurisdiction is established.

Removal from a role is distinct from exclusion from inquiry. Serious safety concerns may justify temporary protective restrictions pending review. A local operator may restrict access to its own services under transparent rules, but cannot prevent a person from pursuing inquiry elsewhere. Protect people who raise good-faith concerns from retaliation; do not require public exposure of sensitive evidence as a condition of reporting. Publish aggregate lessons without creating personal misconduct rankings. Exact review deadlines, appeal eligibility and independent reviewer selection remain open.

08 / Governance of the four lists and human commitments

The four lists are distinct views of inquiry and voluntary conduct. Governance administers the quality, provenance, scope and accessibility of records; it does not determine the truth of propositions or impose a moral doctrine.

List	Governance responsibility
One: Agreement	Require a precise proposition, version, named or appropriately identified consenting participants, scope, grounds and verification status. Never generalize local unanimity to humanity.
Two: Disagreement	Preserve distinct positions, objections, reasoning and remaining differences. Do not erase dissent because an operational decision has been made.
Three: Inquiry	Enable independent question creation, dependencies and voluntary collaboration. No global body assigns research priorities.
Four: Commitment	Maintain candidate conduct propositions, scoped agreements, voluntary undertakings and evidence of demonstration as distinguishable records.

Responsibility and restraint

List Four investigates both what we will do and what we will not do. The twelve initial candidate restraints and six paired responsibility/restraint domains in the Founding Proposal remain candidates, not binding commitments. Shared commitments may arise from different philosophical grounds while disagreements continue to be investigated. Whether universally appropriate conduct can be derived from reality remains an open research question.

Limits of governance over commitments

- A maintainer may assess whether a record meets stated procedural standards, not whether a person is morally worthy or genuinely understands a claim.
- No person is required to sign, demonstrate or retain a commitment to participate in philosophical inquiry. A local community may enforce proportionate rules against actual misconduct independently of philosophical assent.

- An undertaking applies only to the signatory, exact version, stated scope and conditions. An organizational undertaking requires authorization within that organization's own responsibilities and cannot stand in for individual understanding or consent.
- Evidence of conduct must be consented, contextual and limited to the relevant claim. Preserve contrary observations and limits; do not use evidence of one act to rank a person's entire life.
- Withdrawals, revisions, challenges and review records should follow the Open Protocol. A revised commitment requires renewed assent; earlier signatures cannot be silently transferred.

The proposed Declaration of Human Commitments may emerge as an openly maintained, versioned record of voluntary undertakings. It is not a global law, compulsory declaration or claim to represent all people. Each edition must identify scope, grounds, version, verification limits and disagreements. Governance of the declaration, thresholds for its inclusion and standards of lived demonstration remain open. No global tribunal is authorized by this framework.

09 / Community integrity, privacy and AI

Freedom of inquiry requires conditions in which people can participate without coercion, harassment, fabricated evidence or unsafe disclosure. Local rules should distinguish procedural misconduct from intellectual disagreement. Criticism of a philosophical tradition, founder, institution or policy is not misconduct merely because it is unwelcome.

Proposed moderation safeguards

Publish behavior-based rules, examples, responsible roles, reporting channels, review steps and possible measures. Apply the least restrictive effective intervention, considering severity, recurrence and safety. Document warnings, restrictions or removals with reasons, scope and review date. Immediate protective action may precede a hearing when delay creates a serious risk, but must be reviewed promptly. Provide notice, response and appeal where safe and appropriate. Do not equate account restriction with

invalidity of a philosophical contribution; where lawful and safe, retain its examinable reasoning independently of sanctions.

Consent and federated records

Participation, publication, reuse and replication require distinct attention. Maintain public, restricted and private access categories, with applicable terms, retention and responsible operators. Keep sensitive living evidence local wherever possible and share only consented, necessary summaries or references. Avoid collecting intimate family evidence for the sake of proving a commitment. Explain replication risks before publication. Support correction, restriction and withdrawal notices, retain non-sensitive provenance only where permitted, and acknowledge that complete removal from distributed copies cannot be guaranteed. Local operators are responsible for applicable law and rights; the global endeavour is not a substitute for those responsibilities.

AI governance

Foundational direction. AI is integral but non-authoritative. Communities may choose their own systems or operate without AI. The protocol remains independent of any vendor. Material AI-assisted mappings, interpretations, summaries and proposed findings must be identifiable; human contributors must be able to inspect primary sources and correct misrepresentation. AI cannot sign, verify on someone's behalf, declare consensus, determine human worth, silently resolve objections or act as the final arbiter of a philosophical dispute.

AI may assist routing reports or identifying potentially problematic records. Final consequential moderation and eligibility decisions should have accountable human review and an appeal route. Do not send confidential or restricted material to AI services without authorization and safeguards. Publish the uses and limitations of automated systems, disclose material provider conflicts, and monitor for distorted translations, invented evidence and biased exclusion. No automated reputation or moral score is proposed.

10 / Distributed economics and shared resources

Foundational direction. Independent individuals, communities and organizations sustain their own activities and voluntarily contribute to shared infrastructure and collective endeavours. No central treasury or mandatory global fee is required. Donations, endowments or earned revenue may be used locally, but no single model is prescribed.

Activity	Proposed resource responsibility
Local communities	Their own contributors and supporters.
Research projects	Contributors and voluntary supporters.
Digital platforms	Their respective operators.
Regional assemblies	Participating communities.
World assemblies	Voluntarily participating people and organizations.
Common protocol	Contributions of time, expertise and resources.
Educational resources	Independent contributors and supporters.

The six economic principles are autonomy, voluntary contribution, accountability, mutual support, independence of inquiry and open knowledge. Fair compensation for actual work is compatible with openness. Compensation, wealth, sponsorship or unpaid status must not determine philosophical authority. Do not create incentives to manufacture disagreement, prolong inquiry or restrict foundational knowledge and verification pathways behind payment.

Proposed local financial accountability

Each resource-holding unit identifies the legal holder, financial mandate, approved scope, contributors, material restrictions and accountable roles. Publish proportionate budgets, income and expenditure, material funding conditions, conflicts, progress and variances; protect personal details when necessary. Larger or riskier commitments should receive independent review and required legal approvals. No one can commit another community's resources without its authorization. Payment for work must be distinguished from ownership or control of philosophical findings.

Voluntary pooling for shared needs

Publish a specific need, responsible operators, proposed budget, funding gap, alternatives, deliverables, review and closure date. Communities may pledge resources voluntarily. The identified holder records commitments, expenditures and unused funds, and explains how balances or assets will be handled on completion. Shared services should be portable and avoid dependence on one donor. No pooled project creates continuing dues or global authority. Underfunded archiving, translation, accessibility and interoperability are risks; make these needs visible and invite mutual support, including support for less-resourced communities.

Specific spending thresholds, accounting standards, compensation arrangements, audit intervals, legal structures and resource-sharing agreements remain local or open decisions. This framework does not create a binding financial obligation.

11 / Continuity, founding transition and safeguards

Foundational direction. Protect the permanent purpose; keep hypotheses examinable and methods, governance and organization evolving. Develop the endeavour openly from the beginning. The first open-source project is The Fourth List itself.

Distinct levels of change

Document or record	Treatment
Founding Proposal	Historical, versioned proposal; open to challenge and revision.
Foundational Charter	Purpose and fundamental freedoms intended for lasting protection after collective examination; adoption and amendment mechanisms open.
Research agenda and hypotheses	Always examinable; contrary findings must remain accessible.
Protocol and Governance Framework	Evolving standards and coordination arrangements; local adoption and independent alternatives permitted.
Platform and Community Handbook	Adaptable implementations and practical guidance, not permanent doctrine.

A proposal to reinterpret or change the Charter should identify the protected purpose, affected freedoms, arguments, counterarguments and implications for continuity. Publish the proposed text and alternatives, allow independent examination, and record each community's adoption or objection. No global ratification procedure is adopted here. A divergent community may fork and state its differences, but must not claim its reinterpretation binds the whole network. Protecting purpose must never prevent inquiry from finding against the founding hypotheses.

Founding transition and the role of K4M2A

K4M2A may initiate work, support infrastructure and invite contributors, as envisaged in the proposal; its eventual legal and institutional role remains undecided. Any initial maintainer mandate should be explicit, bounded, publicly reviewable and capable of transfer. Publish asset ownership, repository access arrangements, funding conditions, decision scope and succession plans. Avoid exclusive founder vetoes, personal control of essential credentials and dependence on a single domain or service. No transfer of assets or rights is presumed by this draft.

Continuity practices

Maintain portable, versioned public records, open specifications, documented operating procedures, backups and tested restoration. Identify who can recover shared infrastructure and how responsibilities can be transferred if someone departs. Keep restricted records separate from public archives. Review ownership, licenses and dependencies periodically; make discontinuation and migration plans available to affected communities. If a supporting organization dissolves, its legal responsibilities remain with the appropriate entity, while the open endeavour can continue independently. Specific legal protections, trademarks, licenses and succession rules need separate examination.

12 / Pilot governance and evaluation

The Open Protocol proposes a small experiment involving two independent communities, one offline-first and one digital. Each voluntarily examines a shared proposition and a candidate conduct commitment. Governance should be tested through this work, not merely endorsed in a document.

Proposed pilot sequence

1. Each community publishes its temporary governance rules, roles, local decision fallback, reporting and appeal channels, resource commitments and data practices. Participants inspect these before contributing.
2. Nominate a facilitator, documenter, operator and independent review contact for the pilot. Roles may overlap if conflicts are disclosed and an alternative reviewer is available.
3. Conduct the inquiry under the seven-stage dialogue process; preserve independent answers, explanations, reassessment, scope and differences.
4. Invite a voluntary commitment and define how implementation could be examined, without requiring signature or disclosure of private living evidence.
5. Exchange permitted records using the Open Protocol profiles and twelve proposed conformance tests. Publish successes and failures; do not claim tests have passed before execution.
6. Exercise one genuine or clearly simulated protocol change, operational deadlock, appeal and fork/reconnection. Record the decisions, objections, burden on participants and consequences.
7. Publish a pilot report, seek public review, revise procedures and invite additional independent implementations. Participation does not require adopting every revision.

Proposed governance evaluation

Question	Evidence to examine
Is authority bounded?	Mandates, decision scopes and actual handling of objections.
Is independent inquiry preserved?	Ability to challenge founders, decline commitments and pursue alternative methods.
Is coordination possible?	Successful exchange, documented dependencies and local adoption.
Is accountability meaningful?	Review accessibility, remedies and reasons for decisions.
Are resources sustainable?	Disclosed commitments, gaps and actual fulfilment without compulsory fees.
Are contributors protected?	Consent handling, accessibility and proportionate responses to misconduct.

Measure whether clarity, independent examination and meaningful contributions improve, not simply votes, signatures, registrations, citations or engagement. Use qualitative accounts, limitations and actual records rather than competitive rankings. A failed pilot is useful evidence for improving governance. No test results or participating communities are claimed by this draft.

13 / Templates and open decisions

Minimal operational records (working design)

Record	Suggested fields
Mandate	ID, unit, purpose, holder, scope, limits, resources, review date, handover, conflict disclosures.
Decision	ID, authority, affected scope, alternatives, grounds, objections, action, rule used, review and rollback.
Protocol proposal	ID, version, layers, problem, design, alternatives, impacts, tests, migration, adoption and dissent.
Review or appeal	ID, decision, grounds, reviewer independence, evidence access, finding, remedy, review route.
Shared resource project	ID, holder, need, budget, pledges, expenses, deliverables, closure and balance treatment.
Compatibility report	Implementation, version, profiles, tests, results, limitations, reviewer and date.

These records should use the Open Protocol's provenance and versioning rules where applicable. Public summaries must not expose private evidence

or credentials. Local retention and access rules should be explicit. Templates are not mandatory technical schemas.

Worked governance example (hypothetical)

Two communities propose adding a translated concept identifier to exchange records. One objects that the translation may collapse two distinct meanings. Maintainers publish the objection and test both representations. Community A adopts an experimental extension with a reversible mapping; community B retains the previous version. Both publish compatibility limitations and exchange only records whose meanings and permissions can be preserved. No group is compelled to upgrade. A later review may support a revised shared mapping. The operational adoption does not decide which philosophical meaning is correct.

Open decisions register

Area	Questions requiring collective examination
Authority and responsibility	Role selection, duration, removal, independent review, succession, delegation and conflicts.
Decisions	Quorum, thresholds, consultation periods, deadlocks, urgent exceptions and scope.
Protocol	Release management, maintenance mandates, compatibility assessment, migrations and security.
Identity	Charter adoption and protection, naming, forks, affiliation and disputes over purpose.
Resources	Financial disclosure, pooled funds, compensation, ownership, licenses and legal entities.
Human safeguards	Appeals, moderation, consent, replicated withdrawal, evidence standards and AI review.
List Four	Declaration governance, voluntary undertaking status, positive commitments, demonstration and organizational responsibility.

C Platform Architecture

Founding draft for collective examination | 24 November 2026

An open-source reference implementation for collective philosophical inquiry, independent verification, accessible education and voluntary human commitments, connected to a federated network of independently operated communities.

Status and scope

This document translates the Founding Proposal, Foundational Charter, Open Protocol and Governance Framework into a proposed technical architecture. The agreed purpose, federation, individual understanding, independent verification, openness and freedom to fork are constraints. The software boundaries, data structures, interfaces, pilot sequence and engineering choices below are working designs, not approved technical standards. No software has been built or tested as part of this document.

The platform is one implementation of the open protocol, not the protocol itself. A paper-based group, an independent website, or a university research repository can participate without using the reference software. The platform must make human inquiry easier without claiming to determine what is true, what another person understands or how a human being ought to live.

01 / Product purpose and architectural principles

The permanent purpose is to investigate whether universally verifiable understanding of reality is possible, progressively make that understanding accessible to every human being, and examine how humanity can live

in accordance with it. Reality in its entirety remains in scope. Common reality and the ultimate resolvability of genuine contradictions remain hypotheses, not software assumptions or eligibility tests.

The product is neither a conventional social network nor a single encyclopedia. It is an infrastructure for initiating, conducting and continuing inquiry, preserving distinct positions and making the means of verification accessible. Its principal measure of usefulness is whether a person can advance a question and independently examine a claim, not how long that person remains on the platform.

Foundational direction	Architectural consequence
Individual understanding	Only a person can record their own assent or independent examination. A facilitator may transcribe with authorization.
Collective inquiry	Shared workspaces preserve questions, positions, objections, methods and next steps.
Open protocol and open software	Publish formats, adapters, tests and code so independent implementations can interoperate.
Federated network	Each operator controls its own records and policies; no mandatory global account or database.
Freedom to fork and reconnect	Portable authorized records, documented extensions and reproducible deployment.
Universal accessibility	Public reading, multilingual content, low-bandwidth formats and offline participation.
Understanding through living	Separate claims, undertakings and consented observations; do not construct personal moral scores.
Integral, non-authoritative AI	Replaceable assistance components; independent human confirmation remains necessary.
Distributed resources	Independent hosting and local budgets; shared services are optional.

Non-goals

The platform will not rank people by philosophical understanding, generate global truth labels, compel consensus, require institutional sponsorship, publish private family life by default, or make access to common knowledge dependent on payment. It will not turn agreement counts, citations, contribution totals, signatures or AI confidence into proxies for truth. A chronological or relevance-based discovery view may exist; engagement-

maximizing feeds, streaks and competitive leaderboards are outside this design.

02 / Users, journeys and product surfaces

All human beings are eligible to contribute; access restrictions apply to particular services, restricted records or capacity-limited activities, not to the right to initiate inquiry elsewhere. People may assume multiple roles, with each mandate and permission separately identified. Institutions can support projects, but philosophical responses are attributable to individuals.

User or function	Primary journey
Public reader or learner	Find a question, understand its definitions, read positions and evidence, download a pathway, examine independently.
Presenter	Publish a system or precise proposition, its grounds, sources and proposed verification pathway.
Examiner	Record initial response, challenge an assumption, attempt a pathway, document findings and reassess.
Facilitator	Create a session, define scope and stages, obtain confirmations, record unresolved differences.
Documenter or translator	Transcribe with consent, connect sources, propose a translation or semantic mapping, request corrections.
Community or project organizer	Create a local workspace, publish methods and needs, arrange meetings and maintain authorized records.
Maintainer or reviewer	Validate record structure, manage access, review proposals, publish procedural decisions and appeals.
Independent operator	Deploy, configure, export, import, test compatibility and share improvements.

Proposed navigation

The public experience begins with Questions, the Four Lists, Philosophical Systems, Projects and Learning. The community experience adds Sessions, Contributions, Translation and Community Resources. A separate governance area contains protocol proposals, adoption decisions, capability statements, moderation rules and public financial records where applicable. People can browse public material without registration; contribution workflows request only the identity and permissions necessary for the action.

A question page should show precise wording, definitions, alternative interpretations, proposed dependencies, existing inquiries, open objections, pathways and links to all relevant lists. A philosophical system page preserves its source, context, original-language concepts, complete architecture and relationships to individually examinable propositions. Neither page is a popularity contest or a single merged answer.

03 / Logical system and deployment architecture

Use a modular reference implementation with explicit interfaces between product workflows, records, permissions and exchange. A modular monolith is a recommended pilot starting point, not a binding technology decision. Separate deployments should be possible when operational needs justify them. The primary repository is authoritative for its own accepted records only; indexes and AI retrieval stores are derived and rebuildable.

Module	Responsibility
Web and offline interface	Accessible reading, contribution forms, sessions, printable kits and review queues.
Inquiry application	Question, system, proposition, dialogue, verification and learning workflows.
Four-list projection	Compute scoped views from exact revisions and local policies; retain historical snapshots.
Record service	Validate envelopes, store revisions and links, track provenance, resolve references.
Access and policy service	Identity, role mandates, consent, moderation and publication authorization.
Exchange adapter	Export, import, capabilities, conflict quarantine, acknowledgement and restriction notices.
Discovery service	Search, relationship traversal, translation mappings and optional external index.
AI gateway	Retrieve authorized sources, call optional model adapters, label suggestions and log review.
Operations and governance	Public proposal records, local policy versioning, audits, backup and observability.

Logical flow

The public and contributor interface calls the inquiry and governance application. The application checks authorization before reading or writing

versioned records. A publication transaction writes the authorized revision, its links and a durable event for asynchronous projection or exchange. Search, graph and list views are rebuilt from permitted records; they cannot silently change the underlying claims. Restricted evidence remains in a separate access-controlled store. AI reads only the permitted scope and returns a suggestion for review, never a privileged record write.

Deployment topology

Each community may run a complete node with an application, primary store, private evidence store, search index, exchange worker and optional AI adapter. Small communities may share hosting while retaining distinct namespaces, export rights and governance. An independent directory or index may discover public records from multiple nodes, but it is replaceable and has no authority to impose a canonical graph. The network does not require a global identity provider, blockchain, global consensus algorithm or permanent central server.

04 / Knowledge model and record lifecycle

The Open Protocol's ten core units, five List Four extensions and supporting operational records are retained. Implementations may choose different internal representations if they preserve semantics and exact references. The following maps conceptual units to proposed record families; it is not a final database schema.

Record family	Types and critical distinctions
Questions and meaning	Question, concept: original wording, definitions, language, context, alternative meanings and significance.
Claims and grounds	Proposition, reasoning, observation: distinguish a claim, its inference, observations and interpretation.
Examination	Verification pathway, verification record: target revision, method, examiner, conditions, findings, contrary results and limitations.
Challenges	Objection: target, grounds, exact point of difference and proposed examination.
Whole systems	Philosophical system: linked claims, concepts, context, sources and verification means.

Record family	Types and critical distinctions
Living	Living demonstration: relevant claim, consent, context, evidence, period and limits.
Conduct	Conduct proposition, commitment definition: claim about conduct distinct from a precise responsibility or restraint.
Undertaking	Voluntary undertaking: actor, exact definition, scope, grounds, date and consent.
Evidence and review	Implementation or demonstration record; review or revision: observation, correction, withdrawal or updated interpretation.
Operational	Response, session, agreement, list snapshot, educational pathway, protocol proposal and adoption records.

Proposed logical storage

Use a stable logical record identifier plus an immutable revision identifier. Preserve type, protocol version, origin, attribution, created time, scope, language, content, typed links, provenance, access, reuse, previous revision and status. These fields are inherited from Open Protocol section 03. A separate relation table or equivalent graph representation can index links by source revision, relation and target revision. A local policy record specifies which views may be generated. References to external or restricted records remain unresolved placeholders when their contents are unavailable.

A link is an attributed claim rather than an automatic fact. Relations include supports, contradicts, depends_on, clarifies, translates, tests, revises, agrees_with, undertakes, examines_implementation_of, challenges and withdraws. Preserve alternative relationships, cycles and contested mappings. Store original texts and authorized source references separately from translations, AI summaries and paraphrases.

Record lifecycle and consistency

Drafts may be edited privately. Before publication, validate fields and references, inspect consent and reuse permissions, show an exact preview, and obtain the contributor's authorization. Publication creates a stable revision and a receipt. A substantive edit creates a new revision; old signatures, responses and examination records continue to refer to their original

version. Withdrawal and restriction are explicit notices, not silent edits. Privacy-related erasure may remove content even when a non-sensitive history marker can legitimately remain.

The pilot should use transactions for local record creation and access changes, optimistic revision checks for concurrent edits, idempotent event handlers and periodic reconstruction of derived views. Do not automatically resolve competing interpretations using a last-write-wins policy. Conflicting revisions or identifiers require provenance-preserving review.

05 / Inquiry workspace and the four lists

An inquiry workspace is a scoped collaboration, not an authoritative thread. It links to an existing question or creates one, identifies a method version, participants and roles, and states what can be published. A session may extend across meetings and years. Contributors may leave without being recorded as having rejected a position.

Dialogue stage	Proposed software support
1 Independent position	Exact proposition and definitions; private initial response before group discussion.
2 Mutual comprehension	Restatement and participant confirmation; unresolved misunderstanding flag.
3 Identification of differences	Connect opposing concepts, premises, observations or conclusions.
4 Identification of foundations	Structured grounds and assumptions, references and method selection.
5 Collective examination	Pathway editor, examination log, counterexamples, limitations.
6 Independent reassessment	New response with grounds; retain initial response separately.
7 Documentation	Scope, historical snapshot, open questions and authorized publication.

The response form offers Yes, No, Undetermined, Conditional and Needs clarification, plus a distinct non-response or absence state. Conditional assent cannot count as unconditional agreement. Participants may keep initial positions private until authorizing disclosure. The software must not

expose others' answers before independent responses where the chosen method requires independence.

Four-list projections

List	Read model and guardrail
01 Agreement	Display exact proposition revision, consenting scope, individual grounds and verification status. Unanimity is only for the declared scope.
02 Disagreement	Preserve distinct positions, assumptions and objections; distinguish uncertainty and semantic differences from contradiction.
03 Inquiry	Show unresolved question, significance, dependencies, prior work, possible methods and unmet needs.
04 Commitment	Display conduct proposition, candidate definition, agreement, voluntary undertaking, evidence and review as separate states.

Each snapshot identifies publisher, date, local policy, protocol version, relevant revisions and scope. A snapshot is a record of what was established procedurally at that time; it is not a verdict. For ten scoped participants with eight explicit Yes responses, one No and one Undetermined, do not label the entire group unanimous. A separately published agreement of eight must disclose its narrower scope and the broader disagreement where authorized. A proposition revision requires fresh responses.

Examination and commitments

Present the seven epistemic classifications from the protocol (Question, Hypothesis, Articulated understanding, Examinable understanding, Independently verified, Universally verifiable, Challenged) with the assigning party, policy, grounds and scope. They are not a global linear score. A challenge can coexist with past findings. Until local criteria have been examined, display records rather than verdicts.

List Four supports both responsibility and restraint. Candidate commitments, acceptance of a conduct proposition, an explicit undertaking, observed implementation and subsequent review must be separately represented. A signature applies only to the actor, exact wording, scope and conditions. The proposed Declaration of Human Commitments is a versioned, scoped publication built from these records, not a universal law. No automatic admission threshold or moral rating is implemented.

The twelve original candidate restraints and six paired domains remain proposals for examination.

06 / Search, graph and collective direction

The shared architecture of understanding is an evolving graph of questions, concepts, claims, reasoning, examination records and commitments. It is not an agreed universal ontology. A graph view should distinguish a proposed dependency from an examined dependency and allow a person to inspect its author, grounds, objections and version. Clicking a node should reveal its source record rather than a generated summary alone.

Discovery and search

Provide exact text search, filtering by language, type, origin, date, scope and examination status, then related-record navigation. Semantic retrieval may suggest related material, but must not merge distinct concepts automatically. When indexing external repositories, carry the source and last synchronization time; unavailable sources and incomplete coverage must be visible. Explain sorting criteria and allow alternatives, including chronological and text relevance. Do not suppress minority positions merely because they have fewer signatures or references.

Research priority criterion	Discovery feature
Foundational significance	Proposed dependency paths, affected questions and objections to the dependency.
Universal relevance	Context, populations affected and differing interpretations of relevance.
Consequence for living	Linked commitments, implications and living inquiries.
Present understanding	Prior work, unresolved differences, findings and their limits.
Possibility of investigation	Available pathways, collaborators and practical obstacles.

The platform should expose where contributions may be useful, not calculate an obligatory global priority score. Projects can publish voluntary requests for translation, examination, facilitation or engineering. People

may investigate neglected questions even if they attract little attention. A duplicate suggestion is an invitation to connect records, not an automatic deletion.

07 / Offline communities, education and living

The digital platform is a companion to offline inquiry, not its gatekeeper. A community may operate entirely on paper, later export authorized records through a local documenter, or use a self-hosted device without internet access during meetings. An offline-first kit should include question and concept forms, individual response sheets, dialogue stages, verification logs, commitment forms, consent guidance and an import template. Provide accessible printable exports and human-readable record identifiers. Paper signatures and transcription must remain distinguishable from direct digital attestations.

Offline synchronization

A participant or documenter can prepare records locally, mark publication choices and export a bundle. Before upload, the contributor reviews the exact transcription or confirms it through a suitable accessible method. The receiving node validates identifiers, original dates, revisions and authorizations, deduplicates repeat imports, and reports missing references. If two editors change a record offline, retain both versions for review; never silently discard an initial response or overwrite an undertaking. The same procedure supports delayed connectivity, not automatic public publication.

Learning pathways

Learning pages link to the exact claim or system version, concepts, prerequisites, activities, possible contrary findings and sources. Permit multiple approaches at different levels of complexity and in different languages. A learner can record questions, independent explanations or examinations privately and elect to publish them. Course completion and quizzes measure the specific activity, not verified philosophical understanding. Translation interfaces retain original wording, contested equivalences and

human-reviewed revisions. Provide text equivalents, keyboard navigation, readable contrast and a low-bandwidth experience; verify accessibility with actual users rather than declaring universal access on release.

Examination through living

Support the seven domains named in the proposal: individual living; family and relationships; education; production and exchange; society and governance; humanity's relationship with nature; science and technology. Each inquiry should define the claim, implications, period, context, consent, methods, alternative explanations and safety constraints. Distinguish self-report, observation and independent examination. Store only necessary information. The public graph can link to a consented summary or redacted record; it should never expose an entire household's private history or infer someone else's commitment from a participant's report. Participation, publication and reuse require separate attention, and a person must be able to stop an examination.

08 / Federation, exchange and reconnection

The federation is a network of autonomous nodes implementing declared protocol profiles. The Open Protocol's four proposed profiles (Inquiry, Verification, Four-list publication, Federated exchange) are retained. No deployment is entitled to claim full compatibility merely because it runs the reference software. Publish capabilities, version, extensions, local policies, tested profiles, failures and contact or support routes.

Proposed pilot exchange contract

Operation	Intended behavior
Describe capabilities	Return supported versions, profiles, public record types, extensions, export methods and access policies.
Export authorized bundle	Include a manifest, record envelopes, exact revisions, linked references, origin, reuse terms and export time.
Validate import	Check required fields, size, format, identifier consistency, permissions and unsupported extensions. Preview before acceptance.
Accept or quarantine	Store compatible revisions idempotently; preserve origin; isolate invalid, conflicting or unsafe content for review.

Operation	Intended behavior
Resolve references	Retrieve permitted targets or display missing, restricted and unknown references explicitly.
Exchange notices	Transmit corrections, withdrawals and restrictions with target revision, reason where shareable and authority. Record acknowledgements and failures.
Reconcile	Compare manifests and known revisions; request missing authorized records; retain conflicting assertions without automatically combining them.

For v0.1, start with manually exchanged portable UTF-8 JSON or tabular bundles and documented validation tests. This follows the Open Protocol's suggested pilot. An automated transport with incremental cursors, retries, rate limits, authentication and signed messages can be proposed after the exchange model works between two genuinely independent implementations. The exact schema, transport, signature scheme, namespace discovery and collision rules remain open. An optional digest can help detect corrupted bytes; it cannot establish truth or authorship without an appropriate trust model.

Trust and independence

Separate transport identity, record attribution, local permission, consent and evidence status. A remote node cannot confer local privileges by importing an officeholder record. Public records from a peer are external contributions, not automatically accepted findings. Receiving operators apply transparent local safety and publication policies and may refuse unsafe imports while preserving permitted information about the refusal. Peer allowlists, if used for operational security, must not become global permission to inquire. Federation can continue through alternative peers or manual exchange.

Fork and reconnect

A fork publishes its source version, changes, licenses, compatibility limits and independent identity. Open software and appropriately licensed records can be reused; restricted evidence and personal account credentials cannot be copied indiscriminately. A reconnecting implementation tests mapping, provenance, consent and migration, preserves conflicting

versions, and documents local adoption. Reconnection does not require institutional merger or retroactive transfer of signatures. Indexes may link compatible forks without choosing one as the universal source.

09 / Identity, permissions and governance

The reference platform must reflect the Governance Framework's distinction between administration, methodology and inquiry. A person's ability to operate infrastructure or moderate content cannot create philosophical authority. Identity is local or portable through a future interoperable mechanism; a universal identity provider is unnecessary. Pseudonymous participation and appropriate authorized attribution should be possible where consistent with the inquiry and applicable local rules. An examination may require additional identity or independence checks, which must be stated rather than inferred from a badge.

Local role	Example permissions and boundaries
Public	Read and download authorized material; no access to private drafts.
Contributor	Create own drafts, submit authorized records, respond, challenge and request correction. Cannot sign for others.
Facilitator or documenter	Manage a scoped session, prepare authorized transcriptions, request confirmation. Cannot alter another person's answer.
Methodology reviewer	Review format, method disclosures and conformance. Cannot certify truth or understanding.
Moderator	Handle behavior and safety reports under a published mandate, with appeal and limited access.
Operator	Maintain deployment, credentials, backups and infrastructure. Privileged access is audited; cannot manufacture philosophical records.
Project or protocol maintainer	Maintain scoped policies, proposals, tests and releases. Cannot impose a release on independent nodes.

Use least-privilege permissions based on role, mandate, record ownership, access scope and consent. Deny by default for restricted operations. Separate administrative service identities from human contribution identities. Record who authorized a transcription or publication, which rule applied and when. A role transfer must revoke old operational access and preserve

the contributor's independent authorship. Sensitive moderation records should not be publicly replicated by default.

Governance workflows

Provide a public proposal workspace for the seven-stage process: submit, describe, examine, challenge, test, adopt locally and preserve. A decision record includes responsible unit, mandate, affected scope, alternatives, grounds, conflicts, objections and review arrangements. Support independent review and appeal, including redacted public outcomes where appropriate. Local operational decisions can be made under disclosed rules and deadlines, without turning votes into philosophical findings. Display protocol versions and migration status per node. A common directory or reference release is not a central governing body.

10 / AI assistance and evaluation

AI is an integral but non-authoritative layer. Implement optional, replaceable model adapters behind a narrow gateway. Core inquiry, reading, publication and export must remain available without AI. A model may generate proposals to be inspected, but may not directly create another person's assent, sign a commitment, certify verification or resolve a contradiction.

Domain from the founding proposal	Proposed assistance and review
Philosophical mapping	Suggest typed links with source references; human acceptance creates an attributed mapping.
Contradiction discovery	Surface potentially conflicting statements with definitions, scope and exact versions; review apparent versus genuine differences.
Translation	Draft translation and alternatives; keep original, model attribution and reviewer notes.
Collective memory	Retrieve relevant primary records, including unresolved objections and contrary findings.
Dialogue	Draft a restatement; obtain the original participant's confirmation.
Education	Offer explanations and examination activities; learner independently evaluates them.
Verification	Suggest methods, missing evidence and possible contrary results; a person conducts and documents examination.

Domain from the founding proposal	Proposed assistance and review
Coordination	Identify related voluntary projects or unmet needs without assigning people to work.

List Four assistance may compare definitions and surface potential inconsistencies in authorized records. It must never surveil private life, generate fictitious evidence, infer moral worth, or automatically judge compliance. AI-generated text, mapping and interpretation remain distinguishable from human-authored records. Proposed suggestion metadata: source revisions, provider/model or local model identifier where known, date, operation, relevant prompt or reproducible configuration subject to privacy, output and review disposition. Rejected suggestions need not become public philosophical records.

AI data boundary and testing

Authorize retrieval before assembling context, rather than filtering after generation. Never send restricted material to an external model without appropriate authorization and safeguards. Treat retrieved text as untrusted data, not instructions; restrict tools to permitted operations and prohibit autonomous publication or privilege changes. Test source faithfulness, fabricated citations, multilingual conceptual distortion, omission of objections, prompt injection and unauthorized disclosure. Test with AI disabled. Measure the usefulness of suggestions and correction rates, not model confidence as a truth score. Provide clear uncertainty and access to primary sources. Model selection, local deployment and evaluation thresholds remain open.

11 / Privacy, security and resilience

Openness applies to software, methodology and authorized public knowledge, not every human experience. A federated network cannot guarantee that already copied public records disappear. Explain this before publication, minimize personal data, and make restricted or private the default for individual drafts and sensitive living evidence. Use separate consent

decisions for participation, publication, reuse and replication. Record changes and communicate permitted withdrawal or restriction notices; report unacknowledged notices rather than promising universal removal.

Threat or failure	Proposed mitigation
Impersonation or stolen credentials	Secure authentication, revocable sessions, stronger controls for privileged accounts and independently reviewable attribution.
Unauthorized private access	Server-side access checks on reads, writes, exports, search and AI retrieval; separate private objects and audit privileged access.
Malicious imports	Schema validation, content sanitization, size limits, sandboxed processing, quarantine and provenance review.
Spam and harassment	Rate limits, behavior-based reporting and transparent local moderation with review. Do not filter by philosophical position.
Misleading records or forged consent	Exact version references, author confirmation, source evidence, correction workflow and visible disputes.
Replication of restricted data	Authorized export allowlist, manifests, preflight preview, separate storage, notices and incident procedure.
Loss of a node or maintainer	Portable export, encrypted backups, restore drills, documented operational handover and alternative hosts.
Search or AI leakage	Permission-aware indexing and retrieval, deletion/rebuild on access change, tests across distinct users and communities.

Protect transport, storage, secrets and backups according to deployment needs. Maintain dependency updates, vulnerability reporting, incident response ownership and recovery procedures. Avoid retaining full private text in logs or analytics; store only operationally necessary events with retention controls. Security incident handling includes containment, investigation, notification where required, correction and a redacted lessons-learned record. Open auditability does not require disclosing credentials or sensitive evidence.

Define service objectives locally based on actual capacity. For the pilot, verify that a node can be restored from backup, rebuild indexes and export records without contacting another node or model service. Proposed privacy controls require jurisdiction-specific review before deployment; no legal compliance claim is made. Evidence retention, consent revocation and safety for vulnerable contributors require further examination.

12 / Reference implementation and open development

The first implementation should optimize for clarity, portability and learning rather than presumed global scale. The following technology categories are proposed, not selections of vendors or binding standards. A simple web application, transactional relational store with typed links, file storage for attachments, background workers and a portable export format are sufficient to test the central workflows. Specialized graph databases, semantic indexes, real-time federation and distributed identity can be introduced only where evidence shows a need. A graph is a logical model, not a requirement to adopt a particular database.

Component	Pilot recommendation	Decision condition
Interface	Responsive web app plus accessible print/export	Usability on low-bandwidth and offline paths.
Application	Modular monolith with documented module boundaries	Split services only for demonstrated isolation or load needs.
Primary store	Transactional structured records and typed links	Verify immutable revision references and portability.
Attachments	Separate public and restricted storage	Check consent and deletion/retention behavior.
Discovery	Local text search and graph traversal	Expand cross-node and semantic search after quality tests.
Exchange	Validated portable bundles	Automate incremental exchange after two-node test.
AI	Optional provider-neutral adapter	Source faithfulness, privacy and ability to disable.
Deployment	Reproducible local and hosted installation	Independent operator can restore, export and upgrade.

Proposed repository structure

Maintain the protocol separately from the reference implementation. A suggested repository layout is: specification (linked or separately versioned), schema and examples, application modules, exchange adapters, accessibility and translations, conformance fixtures, deployment and migration instructions, community kits, governance proposals and security documentation. Keep secrets, private records, real consent forms contain-

ing personal details and production backups outside the public code repository. Publish example data as fictional or explicitly authorized. Use issue discussions and reviewable changes to improve the design; make test failures and known limitations visible.

Every release should publish its version, changes, compatibility profiles, migration and rollback notes, tested environments and unresolved defects. Pin dependencies for reproducibility, provide a clean installation procedure and preserve authorized exports in a documented format. Independent operators should be able to choose whether to adopt a release. Migrations should preserve source revisions and never silently transfer signatures or mutate semantics. Licensing of software, content, specifications and educational resources requires separate review; no particular license is selected here.

Economics and maintenance

Independent communities sustain their own instances, research and offline activities. Offer a low-resource deployment option and portable static public reading exports so communities with less infrastructure can participate. Shared indexes, translation services, testing and documentation may be supported voluntarily by multiple communities. Do not require paid subscriptions, external AI credentials or participation in a central funding arrangement to access foundational knowledge. A shared service must have identifiable operators, costs, export rights and exit arrangements. Infrastructure cost estimates depend on workloads and hosting choices, and are not yet available.

13 / MVP, acceptance tests and evolution

The first experiment should test whether the architecture improves actual inquiry, rather than attempt to implement the complete global network. The Open Protocol proposes two independent communities, one offline-first and one digital, examining a shared proposition and a candidate conduct commitment. They may voluntarily select a different question. A second deployment using the same code is useful but not sufficient to

demonstrate interoperability with independent implementations; include a separate minimal importer/exporter built from the specification.

Stage	Deliverable and exit condition
A. Design review	Publish record schema draft, user journeys, privacy model and test fixtures. Resolve blocking ambiguities or document local policies.
B. Local inquiry MVP	Create questions and concepts, propositions, grounds, objections, sessions, responses, revisions, verification pathways and findings. Generate four scoped list views. Demonstrate export.
C. Offline and commitment pilot	Use printed forms, consented transcription, learning material and voluntary undertaking/review workflow. Keep sensitive evidence local.
D. Independent exchange	Run two autonomous nodes and an independently implemented adapter. Verify origin, scope, revisions, conflicts, restrictions and correction notices.
E. AI assistance pilot	Introduce optional retrieval, restatement, translation or mapping with source inspection and review. Verify core workflows without AI.
F. Public experimental release	Publish code, documentation, licenses once selected, capability statements, findings, limitations, operational ownership and next proposals.

Avoid scheduling features until their prerequisites are understood. An initial release can omit automated peer discovery, global identity, a worldwide search engine, native mobile apps, advanced graph visualization, AI personalization and automated translation at scale. It cannot omit the distinctions between agreement, verification and commitment or the ability to export records. A public launch involving real sensitive evidence requires security, consent and operational review first.

Acceptance tests inherited from Open Protocol section 13

Test	Implementation acceptance condition
T01 Meaning	Import two terms with different meanings; original definitions and translation differences remain accessible.
T02 Independent response	Initial response remains separate and hidden where required; reassessment does not overwrite it.
T03 Scope	Eight of ten assenting participants never display as unanimous agreement of ten.
T04 Revision	Change a proposition or commitment; no prior assent, undertaking or verification transfers automatically.
T05 Challenge	A contrary finding remains linked and visible after export/import.
T06 Commitment	Conduct agreement, undertaking and evidence remain distinct, including when no evidence exists.

Test	Implementation acceptance condition
T07 Consent	Restricted living evidence is excluded from public export, search and AI retrieval.
T08 Federation	Independently implemented importer preserves origin, identifiers, scope and linked revisions.
T09 Fork	Alternative local policy is identifiable and compatible public records remain discoverable.
T10 AI	A generated restatement is labeled and cannot create human assent or independent verification.
T11 Accessibility	Offline contributor can inspect, correct and authorize transcription; keyboard and text-based workflows function.
T12 Withdrawal	Restriction notice is sent and acknowledged or failure shown; history is not silently rewritten.

Additional proposed engineering tests: repeat import without duplication; quarantine an identifier collision; enforce authorization on direct API calls and attachments; restore a node from backup; rebuild derived views; run all core workflows with AI disabled; remove restricted records from local search caches; verify migration and export after a release upgrade; test adversarial content in AI retrieval; confirm that operator privileges cannot publish a false signature. Tests should include negative cases and public synthetic fixtures, not private human evidence.

Meaningful product evaluation

Evaluate questions clarified, unresolved differences made precise, independent examinations documented, accessible pathways used, successful authorized exchanges and autonomous operation. Collect qualitative feedback on whether the process improves understanding and reduces repeated work. Track operational reliability, accessibility defects, cost and correction effort as engineering measures. Do not interpret contribution volume, signatory totals, session length or user growth as philosophical progress. Publish pilot findings and remaining problems, including failures. The pilot is an inquiry into the architecture itself.

14 / Open decisions

Open technical and institutional decisions

Area	Decision still required
Semantics	Record schemas, ontology mapping, multilingual equivalence and extension behavior.
Identity and attribution	Namespace ownership, portability, key management, signatures and independence checks.
Federation	Transport, discovery, incremental synchronization, trust policies, conflict handling and notice delivery.
Verification	Evidence sufficiency by claim type, local labeling rules and how challenges affect display.
List Four	Admission and review criteria, consent scope, evidence quality, declaration versioning and withdrawal.
Governance	Responsibility assignments, review and appeal procedures, compatibility review and adoption thresholds.
Privacy and law	Jurisdiction, retention, children and vulnerable participants, replication, rights and remedies.
Infrastructure	Stack, hosting, capacity, service targets, budget, accessibility benchmarks and maintenance arrangements.
AI	Model selection, processing locations, evaluation thresholds, data handling and human review.
Licensing	Appropriate licenses for code, protocol, content and educational material; naming and attribution.

D Foundational Question Bank

Founding draft for collective examination | 24 November 2026

A living, open research agenda for investigating whether universally verifiable understanding of reality is possible, making understanding accessible to every human being, and examining how humanity can live in accordance with it.

What this bank contains

Collection	Status and purpose
Q001–Q018	18 historical candidate questions, preserved verbatim from the original founding presentation. (In the drafts they also appeared as Appendix A of the Founding Proposal; in this book they appear only here.)
Q019–Q054	36 expanded research questions, including explicit formulations of founding hypotheses and the open question of universal conduct. Proposed for examination.
R01–R12	12 original candidate restraints, preserved verbatim from Chapter 4. Not adopted commitments.
P01–P06	Six pairs of responsibility and restraint questions from the founding discussion, with proposed positive formulations.

How to read the bank

No question is mandatory, ranked by philosophical importance, or declared resolved. Question IDs are editorial references in this draft, not globally authoritative identifiers. All suggested meanings, links and methods are working designs. No verification has been performed. A question can have competing propositions, alternative definitions and multiple pathways. Contributors may add, edit, remove from their local view, translate, challenge, fork and reconnect while preserving provenance.

01 / Original questions

Reality and the human being

Original question wording is preserved. Clarification, examination suggestions and links are new annotations.

Q001 | Does anything exist independently of human perception?

Clarify: Independence, existence, perception; distinguish reality from access to it.

Possible examination: Compare realist and non-realist arguments and specify what observations, if any, would discriminate.

Proposed links: Q019, Q020.

Q002 | Is humanity part of a reality larger than itself?

Clarify: Part, whole, humanity, larger; avoid assuming a particular ontology.

Possible examination: Compare accounts of part-whole relations and their explanatory consequences.

Proposed links: Q001, Q019.

Q003 | Can human beings know the nature of reality?

Clarify: Know, nature, reality; distinguish partial from exhaustive knowledge.

Possible examination: Specify competing criteria for knowledge; test an example and its limits.

Proposed links: Q005, Q025.

Q004 | Is a human being fully explainable in biological terms?

Clarify: Human being, fully explainable, biological; distinguish explanation from correlation.

Possible examination: Compare biological and non-reductive accounts; identify different predictions and conceptual limits.

Proposed links: Q021, Q022, Q023.

Q005 | Can knowledge be distinguished from belief?

Clarify: Knowledge, belief, justification, truth.
Possible examination: Compare cases of justified error, reliable knowledge and sincere conviction.
Proposed links: Q025, Q026.

Q006 | Can fundamental disagreements be resolved through inquiry?

Clarify: Fundamental, disagreement, resolved, inquiry; distinguish logical incompatibility from preference.
Possible examination: Trace an actual unresolved disagreement; test restatement and independent reassessment.
Proposed links: Q027, Q028.

Happiness and prosperity

Original question wording is preserved. Clarification, examination suggestions and links are new annotations.

Q007 | Is lasting human happiness possible?

Clarify: Happiness, lasting, possible; distinguish an enduring condition from repeated pleasure.
Possible examination: Compare definitions and longitudinal first-person accounts, with contextual limits.
Proposed links: Q029, Q030.

Q008 | Is understanding necessary for lasting happiness?

Clarify: Understanding, necessary, happiness; distinguish necessary and sufficient conditions.
Possible examination: Seek counterexamples and compare rival explanations of enduring well-being.
Proposed links: Q007, Q031.

Q009 | Does human life have a purpose beyond personal preference?

Clarify: Purpose, personal preference, human life; distinguish descriptive and normative claims.
Possible examination: Compare accounts of meaning and purpose and

examine their grounds.
Proposed links: Q020, Q032.

Q010 | Are human material needs ultimately finite?

Clarify: Material need, desire, finite, ultimately; include variability of contexts.
Possible examination: Compare needs, resource requirements and preferences across life stages and environments.
Proposed links: Q033, Q034.

Q011 | Can prosperity be defined without comparing wealth?

Clarify: Prosperity, wealth, comparison; distinguish material sufficiency and broader well-being.
Possible examination: Compare proposed definitions using cases of unequal wealth and adequate provision.
Proposed links: Q010, Q035.

Q012 | Can people live together without fear of one another?

Clarify: Fear, live together, possibility; distinguish reasonable caution and enduring insecurity.
Possible examination: Compare lived contexts and rival explanations; do not expose people to danger to test claims.
Proposed links: Q036, Q037.

Society, nature and AI

Original question wording is preserved. Clarification, examination suggestions and links are new annotations.

Q013 | Can human societies exist without systemic exploitation?

Clarify: Systemic exploitation, society, possibility; identify boundaries and exceptions.
Possible examination: Compare institutional arrangements, power and distribution of benefits and burdens.
Proposed links: Q037, Q039.

Q014 | Can humans prosper without degrading the natural world?

Clarify: Prosper, degrading, natural world; specify spatial and temporal boundaries.

Possible examination: Compare resource use and ecological outcomes, including displaced impacts.

Proposed links: Q010, Q011, Q041.

Q015 | Are human interests and nature fundamentally in conflict?

Clarify: Human interests, nature, fundamental conflict; distinguish apparent trade-offs from necessary conflicts.

Possible examination: Examine examples of mutual benefit and genuine trade-offs under stated definitions.

Proposed links: Q002, Q041, Q042.

Q016 | Can education help every person understand how to live well?

Clarify: Education, every person, understanding, live well; distinguish in-principle access from achieved outcomes.

Possible examination: Compare learning pathways, accessibility barriers and independent comprehension.

Proposed links: Q003, Q029, Q045.

Q017 | Should some decisions never be fully delegated to AI?

Clarify: Decisions, never, fully delegated, AI; distinguish delegation and accountability.

Possible examination: Compare decision contexts, responsibility, uncertainty and effects on affected people.

Proposed links: Q043, Q047.

Q018 | Can technological advancement alone ensure human well-being?

Clarify: Technology, alone, ensure, well-being; distinguish capability from human outcomes.

Possible examination: Compare settings with similar technological access and differing outcomes; test rival explanations.

Proposed links: Q007, Q029, Q043.

02 / Expanded questions

Existence, reality and consciousness

These are proposed inquiry directions, not conclusions or obligatory priorities. The links are provisional.

Q019 | What does it mean to say that something exists?

Clarify: Existence, appearance, possibility, abstraction.

Possible examination: Compare ontologies and test whether terms refer to the same kind of claim.

Proposed links: Q001, Q020.

Q020 | Is there one reality shared by all human beings?

Clarify: Common reality, shared, standpoint, objectivity.

Possible examination: Examine competing accounts of reality and the significance of shared observations.

Proposed links: Q001, Q019, Q025.

Q021 | What distinguishes a conscious experience from an account of its physical correlates?

Clarify: Experience, report, correlate, explanation.

Possible examination: Compare first-person reports and third-person observations without assuming identity or separation.

Proposed links: Q004, Q023.

Q022 | What constitutes a human being across changes in body, experience and circumstances?

Clarify: Identity, continuity, person, body.

Possible examination: Compare accounts of identity and their implications in carefully defined cases.

Proposed links: Q004, Q021.

Q023 | What relationship, if any, exists between consciousness and physical processes?

Clarify: Causation, dependence, emergence, identity.

Possible examination: Compare competing models and specify evidence or

reasoning that would challenge each.
Proposed links: Q021, Q022.

Q024 | What are the limits of human observation and inference about reality?

Clarify: Access, uncertainty, measurement, inference.
Possible examination: Examine examples of observation error and claims beyond available evidence.
Proposed links: Q003, Q025.

Knowledge, understanding and verification

These are proposed inquiry directions, not conclusions or obligatory priorities. The links are provisional.

Q025 | What conditions distinguish understanding from memorization or justified belief?

Clarify: Understanding, explanation, knowledge, belief.
Possible examination: Ask independent learners to explain and apply a claim in unfamiliar cases; examine limitations.
Proposed links: Q005, Q024.

Q026 | Which methods of verification are appropriate to which kinds of claims?

Clarify: Empirical, logical, experiential and normative claims.
Possible examination: Compare methods against sample claims and document what each can and cannot establish.
Proposed links: Q005, Q025.

Q027 | Can every genuine contradiction ultimately be resolved through sufficient understanding?

Clarify: Genuine contradiction, sufficient, ultimately.
Possible examination: Examine candidate contradictions, possible counterexamples and whether the hypothesis can be tested.
Proposed links: Q006, Q026.

Q028 | How can people distinguish differences in meaning from incompatible claims about reality?

Clarify: Meaning, translation, context, incompatibility.

Possible examination: Use mutual restatement and alternative formulations; preserve disputed semantic mappings.

Proposed links: Q005, Q025.

Q029 | Can human well-being be understood in a way that is independently examinable across cultures?

Clarify: Well-being, universal, cultural conditions.

Possible examination: Compare definitions, accounts and possible counterexamples; preserve different interpretations.

Proposed links: Q007, Q008.

Q030 | How can first-person experience be communicated and independently examined without assuming identical experiences?

Clarify: Experience, report, comparability, privacy.

Possible examination: Compare voluntary reports and methods; avoid equating agreement in language with identical experience.

Proposed links: Q021, Q026.

Human purpose, happiness and material needs

These are proposed inquiry directions, not conclusions or obligatory priorities. The links are provisional.

Q031 | What relationships, if any, connect understanding, emotion, desire and conduct?

Clarify: Understanding, emotion, desire, action.

Possible examination: Compare explanatory models using consented observations and longitudinal reflection.

Proposed links: Q007, Q008, Q025.

Q032 | Can statements about appropriate human conduct be justified independently of personal preference and authority?

Clarify: Appropriate, justification, preference, authority.

Possible examination: Examine competing normative arguments and ex-

plicit premises connecting facts and values.
Proposed links: Q009, Q026, Q054.

Q033 | What distinguishes material needs from wants, aspirations and socially induced desires?

Clarify: Need, want, aspiration, sufficiency.
Possible examination: Compare cases and competing definitions; consider contexts, health and changing circumstances.
Proposed links: Q010, Q029.

Q034 | How can a person or family determine whether its material needs are sufficiently met?

Clarify: Sufficiency, family, resource access, time.
Possible examination: Develop alternative sufficiency criteria and examine voluntary household examples without disclosing private finances.
Proposed links: Q010, Q033.

Q035 | What relationship exists between material sufficiency, prosperity and happiness?

Clarify: Sufficiency, prosperity, happiness; causality.
Possible examination: Compare cases and rival accounts; separate association from causation.
Proposed links: Q007, Q011, Q034.

Q036 | What makes trust possible between people who differ in their beliefs or understanding?

Clarify: Trust, reliability, belief, disagreement.
Possible examination: Examine sustained voluntary cooperation and cases where trust is misplaced.
Proposed links: Q012, Q028.

Relationships, society and institutions

These are proposed inquiry directions, not conclusions or obligatory priorities. The links are provisional.

Q037 | What makes a human relationship mutually beneficial rather than exploitative?

Clarify: Benefit, reciprocity, coercion, exploitation.

Possible examination: Compare definitions with examples of dependence and unequal bargaining power.

Proposed links: Q012, Q013, Q036.

Q038 | What conditions enable disagreements to be examined without coercion or violence?

Clarify: Disagreement, coercion, violence, safety.

Possible examination: Compare dialogue conditions and non-coercive conflict-resolution cases; do not create hazardous tests.

Proposed links: Q006, Q036, Q037.

Q039 | What arrangements of production and exchange enable sufficiency without exploitation?

Clarify: Production, exchange, sufficiency, distribution.

Possible examination: Compare institutional alternatives using explicit assumptions and evidence of outcomes.

Proposed links: Q010, Q013, Q035, Q037.

Q040 | How can institutions exercise necessary operational authority without claiming authority over truth?

Clarify: Operational authority, truth, accountability.

Possible examination: Compare governance cases and challenge procedures; examine practical deadlocks.

Proposed links: Q025, Q038.

Q041 | What constitutes an ecologically sustainable relationship between humanity and the rest of nature?

Clarify: Sustainability, boundaries, regeneration, timescale.

Possible examination: Compare ecological indicators and competing accounts; include local and displaced impacts.

Proposed links: Q014, Q015.

Q042 | Under what conditions are human prosperity and ecological regeneration compatible?

Clarify: Prosperity, regeneration, resource limits.

Possible examination: Examine comparable production and consumption cases and contrary findings.

Proposed links: Q011, Q014, Q041.

Nature, technology, education and collective capacity

These are proposed inquiry directions, not conclusions or obligatory priorities. The links are provisional.

Q043 | How should the consequences of a technology be examined before and after its use?

Clarify: Consequences, risk, benefit, uncertainty, responsibility.

Possible examination: Compare impact-assessment methods and actual outcomes; identify affected parties and missing evidence.

Proposed links: Q018, Q040, Q041.

Q044 | What responsibilities do present generations have towards future generations?

Clarify: Responsibility, future persons, uncertainty, fairness.

Possible examination: Compare normative grounds and long-term consequences; examine hard trade-offs.

Proposed links: Q032, Q041, Q042.

Q045 | What makes an educational pathway capable of enabling independent understanding?

Clarify: Teaching, understanding, independence, accessibility.

Possible examination: Compare learner explanations, transfer to new cases, and barriers across languages and contexts.

Proposed links: Q003, Q016, Q025.

Q046 | How can concepts be translated across languages and traditions without erasing differences?

Clarify: Equivalence, context, terminology.

Possible examination: Compare original and translated formulations with

independent bilingual review.

Proposed links: Q028, Q045.

Q047 | What can AI contribute to inquiry without substituting for human understanding or accountability?

Clarify: Assistance, verification, agency, delegation.

Possible examination: Test AI-assisted and unassisted inquiry; examine provenance, error and human reassessment.

Proposed links: Q017, Q025, Q043.

Q048 | How can the findings of independent inquiries be shared without turning a repository into an authority?

Clarify: Federation, traceability, evidence, authority.

Possible examination: Compare independent records and local views; test exchange without inherited conclusions.

Proposed links: Q026, Q028, Q040.

Human commitments and living

These are proposed inquiry directions, not conclusions or obligatory priorities. The links are provisional.

Q049 | What distinguishes agreeing with a statement of conduct from undertaking to live by it?

Clarify: Assent, voluntary undertaking, scope, capacity.

Possible examination: Compare hypothetical and consented records; examine differences without rating persons.

Proposed links: Q032, Q037.

Q050 | Can people with different philosophical foundations independently adopt the same commitment?

Clarify: Shared commitment, distinct grounds, independent assent.

Possible examination: Compare separate reasons for the same precise proposition and voluntary undertaking.

Proposed links: Q028, Q032, Q049.

Q051 | What constitutes adequate evidence that a commitment has been demonstrated through living?

Clarify: Evidence, duration, scope, consent, counterexample.

Possible examination: Design a low-risk observation method with stated limits and examine contrary findings.

Proposed links: Q026, Q030, Q049.

Q052 | When do two proposed commitments conflict, and how can those conflicts be examined?

Clarify: Conflict, scope, exceptions, competing responsibilities.

Possible examination: Use hypothetical hard cases; compare alternative formulations and document unresolved trade-offs.

Proposed links: Q027, Q032, Q049.

Q053 | How can a shared declaration remain voluntary, revisable and accessible without becoming an imposed moral authority?

Clarify: Declaration, consent, revision, non-signature.

Possible examination: Compare governance and publication designs; test withdrawal and scoped endorsement.

Proposed links: Q040, Q048, Q050.

Q054 | Is there a way of living that is universally appropriate for human beings, not because it has been prescribed by religion, culture, law or authority, but because it is consistent with the nature of reality itself?

Clarify: Universal appropriateness, reality, normative grounds.

Possible examination: Compare accounts linking descriptive understanding to conduct; examine objections and possible counterexamples.

Proposed links: Q020, Q032, Q051, Q052.

03 / Candidate restraints

Candidate human restraints

Original candidate statements are preserved verbatim. None is an adopted undertaking. Record reasons, objections, conditions, possible revisions and voluntary consent separately.

R01 | Human dignity

We will not treat another human being merely as a resource for our own benefit.

Examine: What does merely mean? Distinguish mutual service, dependence and instrumental treatment. Linked questions: Q037, Q049.

R02 | Conflict

We will not initiate violence as a means of resolving differences in understanding.

Examine: What is initiation, violence and a difference in understanding? Examine defence and coercion without prescribing a verdict. Linked questions: Q038, Q052.

R03 | Prosperity

We will not pursue our prosperity through the deprivation of others.

Examine: What counts as deprivation, a voluntary exchange, or a trade-off? Linked questions: Q033, Q035, Q039.

R04 | Nature

We will not knowingly destroy the conditions necessary for life on Earth.

Examine: What is knowingly destroying a condition necessary for life? Distinguish scale, uncertainty and indirect harm. Linked questions: Q041, Q042, Q044.

R05 | Knowledge

We will not knowingly present belief as verified knowledge.

Examine: How are verified knowledge, belief, honest error and knowing misrepresentation distinguished? Linked questions: Q005, Q026.

R06 | Freedom

We will not compel another human being to accept a philosophical or religious belief.

Examine: What counts as compulsion? Distinguish explanation, persuasion, authority and coercion. Linked questions: Q028, Q038, Q045.

R07 | Education

We will not deliberately prevent another human being from developing their capacity to understand.

Examine: What is deliberate prevention, and how do access, safety and parental responsibilities relate? Linked questions: Q016, Q045.

R08 | Economics

We will not build economic systems whose success depends on human suffering or exploitation.

Examine: What is dependence on suffering or exploitation? Consider supply chains, externalities and uncertainty. Linked questions: Q013, Q037, Q039.

R09 | Technology

We will not develop technologies without examining their consequences for humanity and nature.

Examine: What examination is sufficient before development, and what obligations continue after release? Linked questions: Q043, Q044, Q052.

R10 | Governance

We will not treat power as evidence of correctness.

Examine: Distinguish power, legitimate operational authority, expertise and grounds of correctness. Linked questions: Q005, Q040.

R11 | Future generations

We will not pursue present benefits by knowingly compromising the ability of future generations to live well.

Examine: How are uncertain long-term effects, competing needs and present benefits weighed? Linked questions: Q041, Q044, Q052.

R12 | Artificial intelligence

We will not surrender human responsibility for decisions merely because machines can make them.

Examine: What is surrendering responsibility? Distinguish tools, delegation and accountable human decisions. Linked questions: Q017, Q047, Q040.

04 / Responsibility and restraint

Responsibility and restraint

The six paired domains below retain the original organizing questions. The positive formulations are additional illustrative candidates, not automatic inversions of the restraints or approved obligations.

P01 | Human relationships

Responsibility: What will we do for one another? Restraint: What will we not do to one another?

Illustrative positive candidate: We will examine how our conduct contributes to mutual well-being in our relationships. Links: Q036, Q037; R01, R02.

P02 | Nature

Responsibility: What will we do to enrich nature? Restraint: What will we not do to degrade nature?

Illustrative positive candidate: We will examine the ecological effects of our activities and seek ways to support regeneration. Links: Q041, Q042; R04, R11.

P03 | Knowledge

Responsibility: What will we do to advance understanding? Restraint: What will we not do to obstruct understanding?

Illustrative positive candidate: We will make the grounds and limitations of our claims available for independent examination. Links: Q025, Q026; R05, R10.

P04 | Technology

Responsibility: What will we develop? Restraint: What will we refuse to develop?

Illustrative positive candidate: We will examine foreseeable consequences and retain accountability for technologies we develop or use. Links: Q043, Q047; R09, R12.

P05 | Economy

Responsibility: How will we create prosperity? Restraint: How will we refuse to create wealth?

Illustrative positive candidate: We will examine how production and exchange can meet material needs without exploitation. Links: Q033, Q039; R03, R08.

P06 | Society

Responsibility: What institutions will we build? Restraint: What institutional practices will we refuse?

Illustrative positive candidate: We will develop institutions whose decisions, responsibilities and grounds can be examined and challenged. Links: Q038, Q040; R06, R07, R10.

05 / Dependency architecture

A living architecture of dependencies

A question dependency is itself a claim to examine. The network may contain cycles, conflicting dependency proposals, alternative orderings and questions with no established links. The following edges illustrate possible relationships; they are not an assertion that one question must be resolved before another can be investigated.

Potential dependency	Why examine the connection?
Q019, Q020 → Q003	The meanings of existence and common reality may affect what it means to know reality.
Q021, Q023 → Q004	Accounts of consciousness and physical processes may affect biological explanations.
Q005, Q025, Q026 → Q027	The criteria for understanding and verification affect claims of resolution.
Q033, Q034 → Q011, Q035	Distinctions among needs, wants and sufficiency may clarify prosperity.
Q036, Q037 → Q013, Q039	Trust and exploitation may shape institutional and economic arrangements.
Q041, Q042 → Q014, Q044	Ecological boundaries and prosperity may inform duties to future generations.
Q025, Q045, Q046 → Q016	Understanding and conceptual translation may shape accessible education.

Potential dependency	Why examine the connection?
Q026, Q040 → Q048	Procedural authority and evidence may inform a federated record network.
Q020, Q032, Q051, Q052 → Q054	Common reality, normative grounds, evidence of conduct and conflicts may inform the universal conduct question.
Q054 ↔ Q032, Q049–Q053	Examination of conduct may clarify normative grounds, undertakings and methods of living demonstration.

How to maintain links

Record source and target question versions, proposed relation (depends on, clarifies, challenges, overlaps, applies to), author, grounds, limitations and review status. Preserve an alternative or objection rather than erase the prior link. Local views may merge near-duplicates for discovery, but original records and signatures remain distinct. Use a shared graph to discover related inquiries, not to assign a universal sequence.

06 / Inquiry procedure and pilot

Choose an inquiry and examine it

Five prioritization criteria

Criterion	Questions to consider
Foundational significance	Which questions might depend on this one?
Universal relevance	Who is affected, and across which conditions?
Consequence for living	What changes might better understanding enable?
Present understanding	What has been examined, and what remains unclear?
Possibility of investigation	What feasible method, evidence or collaborator could advance it?

Seven-stage inquiry

1. Independent position. 2. Mutual comprehension. 3. Identification of differences. 4. Identification of foundations. 5. Collective examination. 6. Independent reassessment. 7. Documentation. Preserve initial and revised responses and reasons. Do not count silence as assent.

Use Yes, No, Undetermined, Conditional or Needs clarification for an exact proposition; record non-response separately. An open question is not itself a proposition requiring a binary answer. Preserve terms, original language, claims and context. Allow revision without concealing earlier versions.

Illustrative pilot portfolio

Inquiry	What the pilot could learn
Q005	Can participants distinguish knowledge, belief and uncertainty?
Q011	Can competing definitions be clarified without forcing agreement?
Q014	Can empirical and normative components be separated?
Q027	Can a real disagreement be examined without assuming resolution?
Q049 + R05	Can agreement be separated from voluntary undertaking and evidence of conduct?

This portfolio is a proposal for approximately five inquiry streams, not a global priority list. Invite independent submissions before circulating the bank. Ask participants to choose or replace questions and document their reasons. Assess clarity, independently examinable pathways, accessibility and interoperability, rather than agreement or signature counts.

Worked inquiry: prosperity

Illustrative only. No real participants, findings, signatures or verification are represented.

Question and alternative propositions

Q011: Can prosperity be defined without comparing wealth? Preserve its original wording. Hypothetical P-A: A person is materially prosperous when their material needs are adequately met, regardless of other people's wealth. Hypothetical P-B: Prosperity also depends on relative access to resources and opportunities. These may not be genuine contradictions if the term prosperity is used differently.

Pathway for examination

Define prosperity, material needs, adequate provision and comparison. Compare alternative definitions and examples, including scarcity, changing needs and differing social arrangements. Specify observations and counterexamples that would affect each claim. Examine whether either is

a definition, empirical claim or normative judgment. Use anonymized or hypothetical cases unless affected persons consent. Do not infer subjective happiness from income alone.

List	Illustrative record, not an actual finding
One: Agreement	A defined group could accept a precise statement about the limits of income as an indicator, if every in-scope participant assents to the exact version. Record their different reasons and any non-response.
Two: Disagreement	Preserve P-A and P-B, identify the precise differing terms or grounds, and document unresolved objections.
Three: Inquiry	Link Q010, Q033, Q034 and Q035; record why their examination may help.
Four: Commitment	A person may independently undertake a carefully scoped version of P05 or R03 after examining its grounds. Record the undertaking separately from any evidence of living it.

Possible next steps

Invite independent reassessment, preserve negative and inconclusive results, and document what would make the pathway more accessible to another community. A signature does not establish truth. A report of one household's conduct does not establish a universal claim. Compare alternative methodologies and share only authorized records.

07 / Record templates, review and source map

Record and review templates

A. New question or revision

Field	Contributor to complete
Local ID, revision, language, source	_____
Exact wording and context	_____
Key terms and alternative meanings	_____
Why it matters and related work	_____
Candidate propositions and grounds	_____
Proposed links, reasons and objections	_____

Field	Contributor to complete
Examination methods, limitations and next step	_____
Author / consent / access / change history	_____

B. Verification pathway

Record claim and pathway revisions; claimed understanding; grounds; how it was reached; steps; prerequisites and conditions; expected and contrary findings; safety and privacy; examiner independence; observations and deviations; interpretation; conclusion and limitations. Six possible methods: empirical observation, logical reasoning, experimentation, self-observation, interpersonal verification and lived demonstration. Match methods to claims. No method or count automatically establishes sufficient verification.

C. Commitment examination

Record candidate wording and version, scope, grounds and objections, agreement (if any), voluntary undertaking (if any), conditions and duration, evidence and its source, limitations, consent and access choices, withdrawal or revision. Separate agreement, understanding, undertaking and demonstration. Non-signature is not opposition. No person is assessed for moral worth.

Open development and source map

How the question bank evolves

Anyone may propose a question, revision, translation, dependency or examination method. Preserve original versions and grounds; distinguish local priority from global endorsement. Invite objections, document competing interpretations and reassess independently. Publish consented records using the open protocol; do not automatically transfer signatures to translations or revised versions. AI may suggest links or drafts but must be identified and cannot certify understanding. Communities may fork the bank, exchange improvements and reconnect.

Review and unresolved specifications

Before public adoption, invite contributors from different traditions and languages to propose their own foundational questions without first seeing this bank. Review framing, omissions, duplicate concepts, normative assumptions, methods of verification, translation equivalence, accessibility, and candidate restraint scope. Exact admission standards, verification thresholds, licensing, identity and dependency vocabulary remain open. This bank does not resolve these decisions.

All new questions, positive formulations, annotations, dependency edges and pilot choices are editorial proposals. The two founding hypotheses remain examinable. The bank has not been independently peer-reviewed or pilot-tested.

E Illustrative records

This is a fictional example of how a contribution might be structured. It does not represent an actual agreement, a verified finding or a claim endorsed by the founders.

Field	Example
Question	What constitutes human prosperity?
Proposition	Human prosperity cannot be adequately measured by financial wealth alone.
Version	Example 0.1
Definitions needed	Human prosperity, financial wealth, adequacy of measurement.
Possible grounds	Material sufficiency, relationships, capabilities, well-being, ecological conditions.
Possible objection	The term prosperity may be defined narrowly as material wealth, rather than well-being.
Verification pathway	Clarify competing definitions; examine relevant observations and their limits; investigate whether financial measures capture the stated concept.
Dependencies	What are human needs? What constitutes fulfilment? How is prosperity distinguished from accumulation?
Signatories	None. Illustrative only.
Verification status	Not examined; no findings recorded.

If a defined group accepts the same version after inquiry, the statement could be included in that group's List One with the individual grounds preserved. If positions remain incompatible, List Two should identify the precise divergence. The underlying question may continue in List Three, regardless of whether a statement about it has received unanimous agreement.

A verification pathway cannot be considered established merely because the example describes a possible investigation. The standards for evaluating the pathway, documenting observations and assessing counterexamples must still be developed. This example is intended to help contributors critique the record structure itself.

Alternative illustrative signed record

An earlier review of the proposal illustrated record 001, Human prosperity, with a fictional group of 24 out of 24 signatories unanimously accepting the proposition that human prosperity cannot be adequately measured by financial wealth alone. Their differing grounds included material sufficiency and relationships, capabilities and freedom, psychological and social well-being, and ecological limits. The remaining questions were what constitutes sufficient material wealth, whether prosperity can be objectively established, and whether a universal definition exists. This was explicitly hypothetical, not evidence of an actual agreement or independent verification. The unsigned example above remains the starting schema for testing. The hypothetical signed variant illustrates why the number of signatories, grounds for agreement and independent verification must be recorded separately.

Illustrative fourth-list record (hypothetical)

This example applies the earlier illustrative inquiry on prosperity to a candidate restraint. It does not claim an actual signature, agreement, verification or living demonstration.

Field	Illustrative content
Identifier and version	Example C-001, draft 0.1.
Candidate commitment	We will not pursue our prosperity through the deprivation of others.
Type and scope	Restraint; scope, definitions and relevant conditions require examination.
Related inquiry	What constitutes prosperity? What is sufficient material wealth? What constitutes deprivation?

Field	Illustrative content
Possible differing grounds	Material sufficiency and human relationships; rights and capabilities; ecological conditions; other grounds may be submitted.
List One and Two links	No actual agreement established. Record any scoped assent and substantive differences separately.
List Three links	Clarify needs, desires, deprivation, trade-offs and methods of examining consequences for others.
Voluntary undertaking	None recorded in this hypothetical example. An actual signer would specify the precise version and the responsibility undertaken.
Proposed examination	Examine relevant production and exchange arrangements and their consequences over time, with consent and attention to contextual limits.
Demonstration status	Not examined; no evidence of fulfilment or independent verification is asserted.
Objections and limitations	How should unavoidable trade-offs be treated? What evidence establishes deprivation and its relationship to an activity?
Revision and privacy	Preserve the candidate version; avoid public disclosure of private financial or family evidence without appropriate consent.

This example demonstrates the separation of a candidate, the grounds of possible agreement, an actual commitment and observed conduct. It can be adapted to positive responsibilities, but does not prescribe a final record format.

F Founding decisions register

Reading the register

The register maps all 78 numbered discussion sections to the substantive content of this proposal. It is a reconstructed record, not a verbatim transcript or a record of a vote. The discussion occurred on 24 November 2026. A direction accepted by the initial proposer is not an adopted decision of a global community. A working design is a proposal developed during drafting and retained for examination, even when it follows from a confirmed direction. The two accepted hypotheses are not established knowledge. Where several numbered discussion sections concern the same decision, the rows preserve their separate contributions and cross-reference the relevant part.

No. and subject	Status and rationale → where it is now discussed
01. Purpose	Accepted direction: investigate whether universal verification of reality is possible, not only common ground. → Identity and purpose
02. First principles	Working design: eight principles preserve independent inquiry without allegiance. → First principles of inquiry
03. Scope and starting premises	Accepted: reality in its entirety; shared methodology proposed over compulsory shared philosophical premises. → Scope; First principles of inquiry
04. Common reality	Accepted hypothesis H1: common reality and human capacity to verify it remain examinable rather than assumed. → Foundational hypothesis of common reality
05. Verification	Working design: six methods and six criteria keep inquiry broad but examinable. → What constitutes verification?
06. Resolvability	Accepted hypothesis H2: every genuine contradiction can ultimately be resolved through sufficient understanding. Not a guarantee or verified result. → Foundational hypothesis of resolvability
07. Resolution	Working design: five levels distinguish agreement, comprehension and independent verification. → What constitutes resolution?

No. and subject	Status and rationale → where it is now discussed
08. Individual understanding	Accepted: understanding is individual; inquiry can be collective. Prevents an institution understanding on someone's behalf. → Individual understanding, collective inquiry
09. Three lists	Original working design: scoped unanimous agreement, unresolved differences and future inquiry; preserve individual grounds. Retained as Lists One to Three within the revised architecture. → Four lists, four distinct records
10. Interdependencies	Accepted: interconnected architecture over a flat question list; dependencies themselves examinable. → Interconnected questions
11. Prioritization	Working design: five criteria guide attention without central assignment. → Prioritization criteria
12. Participation functions	Working design: presenting, examining, facilitating, documenting; functions not status. → Functional responsibilities
13. Systems and propositions	Accepted: examine both complete systems and individual claims without removing context. → Complete systems and individual propositions
14. Dialogue	Working design: seven stages, from independent positions to documentation; prioritize understanding over debate. → Seven-stage architecture of dialogue
15. Cumulative process	Working design: preserve previous questions, arguments, attempts, revisions and unresolved obstacles. → Cumulative inquiry
16. Pathways	Accepted: claims should have independently examinable pathways; hypotheses without pathways remain hypotheses. → Pathways to understanding
17. Status of understanding	Working design: seven distinct statuses, revisable and not necessarily linear. → Status of understanding
18. Institutional authority	Working design: distributed verification over voting, unanimity or expert verdict; procedural authority only. → Procedural authority, not authority over truth
19. Universal accessibility	Accepted: progressively make understanding accessible to every human being. → Universal accessibility
20. Understanding and living	Working comparison: research-only versus research and education versus research, education and demonstration. → Institutional models
21. Demonstration	Accepted: examination of claims about living is incomplete without examining their implications in living. → Demonstration through living
22. Independence	Working design: six safeguards against philosophical, financial and institutional capture. → Institutional independence
23. Separate functions	Working design: administration, methodology and inquiry have different authority and competencies. → Separate administration, methodology and inquiry

No. and subject	Status and rationale → where it is now discussed
24. Permanence	Accepted: protected purpose, examinable hypotheses, evolving methods and structures. → Permanence of purpose
25. Association	Working design: public, participants, members and officeholders represent different responsibilities, not rank. → Public, participants, members and officeholders
26. Representation	Working design: broaden participation across traditions and regions without allocating truth by representation. → Global representation
27. Individual participation	Accepted: participation based on individual understanding, not institutional representation. → Individual participation
28. Eligibility	Working design: everyone may contribute; limited assemblies may require transparent selection; compare six criteria. → Qualification for participation
29. Selection capacities	Working design: six capacities for meaningful participation; no mandatory academic credentials. → Proposed selection capacities
30. Continuous open inquiry	Accepted direction from the initial proposer's subsequent clarification: online and offline open-source infrastructure. Continuing responsibility and exact assembly arrangements remain working designs. → Online and offline as complementary environments; An open infrastructure, not an organization inviting participation; Periodic assemblies and continuing inquiry
31. Precedents	Research leads: nine organizations and lessons from their distinct models. → Organizations to learn from
32. Scope of openness	Working design: nine domains including software, knowledge, methods, governance and institutional development. → What exactly is open?
33. Architecture	Working design: common purpose and protocol connect online and offline communities; organizations support but do not own inquiry. → Online and offline as complementary environments
34. Open-source analogy	Working design: eleven analogues; software merging is not philosophical verification. → Open-source inquiry analogy
35. Local initiative	Working design: anyone can organize independent inquiry using a seven-part toolkit. → Anyone can start a local initiative
36. Working groups	Working design: ten functional groups, open to additional initiatives. → Proposed permanent open working groups
37. K4M2A	Open institutional choice: possible initiating contributor without permanent control. → K4M2A and possible supporting organizations
38. Revised purpose	Proposed consolidation of accepted purpose, independent verification, lived demonstration and universal accessibility. → Identity and purpose
39. Protocol and platform	Accepted: open protocol plus open-source implementation and community. → Open platform and open protocol

No. and subject	Status and rationale → where it is now discussed
40. Protocol layers	Working design: eight independently implementable and interoperable layers. → Eight protocol layers
41. Global network	Working design: independent individuals, communities and institutions connected by standards, not authority. → Global network
42. Protocol requirements	Working design: seven properties; permissionless contribution distinct from verified status. → Seven fundamental properties
43. Network alternatives	Working comparison: centralized, fully decentralized and federated repositories; tradeoffs inform decision 44. → Architectural alternatives
44. Federated network	Accepted: local autonomy and shared knowledge architecture; common resource not central authority. → Federated global knowledge network
45. Knowledge units	Working design: ten fundamental types and relationships; lists as views. → Fundamental units of the network
46. Versioning	Working design: preserve development of understanding, grounds for changes and objections. → Version history and the evolution of understanding
47. Contributors	Working design: ten examples of contributions beyond academic philosophy. → Contributions beyond philosophy
48. Protocol governance	Working design: contribution-based plus federated coordination, seven-stage documented proposal process; decision mechanisms open. → Governance of the protocol
49. Forking	Accepted: freedom to fork extends to the entire institutional architecture. → Freedom to fork
50. Reconnection	Working design: discovery, collaboration, sharing and possible reintegration without forced uniformity. → Freedom to reconnect
51. Identity	Working design: combine charter commitment and protocol compatibility; central affiliation not necessary. → Independent identity
52. Foundational documents	Working design: charter, research agenda, protocol and implementation handbook serve distinct functions. → Four levels of foundational documentation
53. Unity	Accepted: defined by purpose and protocol, not any entity, website, membership or governing body. → Identity and purpose; Unity of purpose, not unity of organization
54. Five components	Working design: charter, protocol, network, platform, assembly. → Five components
55. Projects	Working design: permissionless independent projects, with seven illustrations. → Independent projects
56. Research agenda	Accepted: emerges organically, without central authority assigning priorities. → Emergent collective research agenda

No. and subject	Status and rationale → where it is now discussed
57. Motivation	Working design: incentives oriented to understanding and resolution, not engagement or status. → Architecture of motivation
58. Recognition	Working design: contribution history, no competitive ranking of human understanding. → Recognition without competitive ranking
59. Resources	Working design: distinguish sustaining practical work from purchasing philosophical influence. → Material resources and responsibility
60. Economics	Accepted direction: distributed support preferred over central financing; local economic models remain free. → Funding alternatives; Distributed economic architecture; Economic principles
61. Economic principles	Working design: six safeguards, distributed responsibility and voluntary pooling; exact funding procedures open. → Distributed economic architecture; Economic principles
62. AI	Accepted: integral but non-authoritative, human understanding and verification central; eight proposed application areas. → The role of AI
63. Measurement	Working design: eight diagnostic indicators of progress rather than engagement or false consensus. → Architecture of measurement
64. Founding outputs	Working design: charter, protocol, platform, handbook, question bank and founding assembly. → Six founding outputs
65. Open founding	Accepted: open-source development from the beginning; the initiative itself is the first project. → Open from the beginning
66. Document suite	Working design: seven independently versioned foundational documents. → Seven foundational documents
67. Architecture overview	Working design: shared purpose and standards link independent online and offline inquiry. → Identity and purpose; What we are building
68. Public introduction	Proposed wording, retaining the agreed name and subtitle. → Identity and purpose
69. Implementation sequence	Working design: eight next steps from consolidation to founding assembly. → Recommended next steps
70. Four dimensions	Proposer raised what humanity will not do; working framework distinguishes understanding, aspiration, commitment and restraint. → Four lists, four distinct records; Four dimensions of the endeavour; Proposed additional record types for List Four
71. Candidate restraints	Working research candidates: twelve statements, preserved in their original wording, not adopted commitments. → Four lists, four distinct records; Candidate restraints; Proposed additional record types for List Four; Local examination of commitments
72. Distinct philosophical grounds	Working design: a shared undertaking may arise before metaphysical differences are resolved; preserve individual grounds. → Four lists, four distinct records; Agreement without identical philosophical foundations; Proposed additional record types for List Four; Local examination of commitments

No. and subject	Status and rationale → where it is now discussed
73. Understanding and conduct	Working design: distinguish understanding, agreement, commitment and demonstration. → Four lists, four distinct records; Understanding, agreement, commitment and demonstration; Proposed additional record types for List Four; Local examination of commitments; Measuring progress in List Four
74. Fourth-list architecture	Historical recommendation was a parallel commitments record; superseded by the initial proposer's explicit decision to rename and add List Four. → Four lists, four distinct records; A living Declaration of Human Commitments; Proposed additional record types for List Four; Local examination of commitments
75. Declaration of Human Commitments	Working design: living, scoped, versioned declaration linked to grounds, objections and evidence. → Four lists, four distinct records; A living Declaration of Human Commitments; Proposed additional record types for List Four; Local examination of commitments
76. Universal conduct	Open research direction: examine whether universally appropriate conduct follows from verifiable understanding, while allowing interim shared commitments. Not a ratified additional hypothesis. → Four lists, four distinct records; The long-term philosophical question; Proposed additional record types for List Four; Local examination of commitments
77. Renamed identity	Accepted: The Fourth List, with its connection to K4M2A and the existing subtitle retained. The detailed responsibility/restraint pairs and revised purpose are proposed articulations of this direction. → Identity and purpose; Four lists, four distinct records; Responsibility and restraint as complementary dimensions; Proposed additional record types for List Four; Local examination of commitments
78. Inclusion and demonstration	Open decision: whether signatures suffice or agreement, undertaking and demonstration should remain separately visible; recommendation is separate states, with privacy. → Four lists, four distinct records; Understanding, agreement, commitment and demonstration; Proposed additional record types for List Four; Local examination of commitments; Measuring progress in List Four

Individually accepted directions and their connections

The explicitly accepted directions in the register should be considered as an interconnected set, not a set of independent legal clauses. The founding discussion did not formally ratify every proposed condition of participation, governance rule, verification threshold, role or technical layer. The original title The Third List and revised subtitle were discussed and the revised subtitle was chosen. The initial proposer subsequently explicitly renamed the initiative The Fourth List to encompass shared commitments and create a connection with K4M2A. The original three inquiry records

are retained, and the fourth records voluntary responsibility and restraint. Candidate commitments, a universal-conduct research direction, and the exact criteria for documenting demonstration have not been individually approved. The accepted hypotheses H1 and H2 retain their exact philosophical character as hypotheses. The acceptance of the scope and of H1 followed questions framed in the same discussion, with the recommendation to keep the nature of reality open. The proposal retains that interpretation rather than adding a new ontological commitment.

The accepted decisions on universal accessibility and demonstration through living extend the original purpose. Individual participation follows from individual understanding. Interconnected questions and the emergent research agenda protect freedom of inquiry while enabling cumulative direction. An open protocol, federation and institutional forkability enable independent implementation and continuity. Distributed support was explicitly preferred by the initial proposer. AI is integral but non-authoritative. Open founding ensures the proposal remains examinable by later contributors. The exact constitutional wording, mechanisms for charter protection, compatibility requirements, privacy arrangements, verification standards and implementation details remain working matters.

G Provenance and editorial notes

This appendix gathers the drafts' own notes on their sources, versions and traceability. In the drafts these notes were spread through every document. They matter for review and for the history of the initiative more than for a first reading. In the source maps below, "Part", "Appendix" and section numbers refer to the original drafts. The table in About this edition shows where each part of those drafts now appears.

About this edition

This reader's edition gathers the eight founding drafts dated 24 November 2026 into one book. The text is the drafts' own. The editing was limited to reordering, removing conversational and version-history residue, linking cross-references, merging exact duplicates and adding brief connective headings, an orientation, a glossary and an index. Every non-trivial change is listed in `CHANGES.md`, which is kept with the book's source files.

Draft	Version	Where it appears in this book
Founding Proposal	v0.3	Chapters 1–5 and 7–16, 18 and 20; Appendices E and F; this appendix
Foundational Charter	v0.1	Chapter 6; drafting notes partly in this appendix
Open Protocol	v0.1	Appendix A
Governance Framework	v0.1	Appendix B
Platform Architecture	v0.1	Appendix C
Community Handbook	v0.1	Chapter 17
Foundational Question Bank	v0.1	Appendix D (it also holds the Proposal's former Appendix A)

Draft	Version	Where it appears in this book
Foundational Architecture Critical Review	v0.1	Chapter 19

The Founding Proposal's fifteen Parts and three appendices now appear as follows:

Founding Proposal	This book
Opening and "How to read this proposal"	Orientation; How the proposal was assembled
Part I, Purpose and vision	Chapter 1
Part II, Philosophical foundations	Chapter 2
Part III, Architecture of inquiry	Chapter 3
Part IV, Knowledge architecture	Chapter 7
Part V, The open protocol	Chapter 8
Part VI, Federated digital infrastructure	Chapter 9
Part VII, Offline communities and independent initiatives	Chapter 10
Part VIII, Participation and contribution	Chapter 11
Part IX, Education and human living	Chapter 5 and, for collective human commitments, Chapter 4
Part X, Governance and institutional architecture	Chapter 12
Part XI, Economic architecture	Chapter 13
Part XII, Motivation and measurement	Chapter 14
Part XIII, The founding process	Chapter 15
Part XIV, Existing initiatives and precedents	Chapter 16
Part XV, Open questions and risks	Chapter 18
Appendix A, Initial question bank	Appendix D, questions Q001–Q018
Appendix B, Illustrative inquiry record	Appendix E
Appendix C, Founding decision and traceability register	Appendix F; its closing notes are below; its "Invitation" is Chapter 20

The Founding Proposal

How the proposal was assembled

The proposal retains the content of the 17-slide initial presentation, v0.1 and the numbered founding discussion of 24 November 2026. Each num-

bered discussion section (01–78) is represented in the traceability register. Version 0.3 preserves the substantive content of The Third List v0.2 and incorporates the subsequent decision to rename the project and introduce a fourth list. The name and fourth-list direction were explicitly chosen by the initial proposer; the detailed architecture below remains open to collective examination. Explicitly accepted directions are marked as founding commitments. Philosophical claims adopted as hypotheses remain open to verification. Detailed designs proposed during discussion are working designs, not decisions adopted by the wider community. Additional questions identified during the audit are marked open. No legal or technical implementation is implied by this proposal.

Source boundaries and provenance

Primary materials: The Third List: A World Assembly of Philosophers (November 2026, 17 slides); the numbered founding dialogue on 24 November 2026 (sections 01–78, including the initial assessment, explicit responses and renaming decision); The Third List Founding Proposal v0.1 and v0.2 (Word and Markdown); and the subsequent completeness audit. The earlier versions retain their historical name. Version 0.3 is the first proposal under the name The Fourth List. The original presentation's 18 candidate questions are preserved in Appendix A. In its initial form the proposal asked contributors to add, edit, remove and prioritize questions. The updated architecture adds identifying dependencies and recording different grounds for responses.

The earlier review identified that the initial questions may reflect the founders' philosophical orientation. To test neutrality, invite people from different traditions to independently submit their ten most fundamental questions before presenting the candidate bank. For example, lasting happiness requires definitions of lasting and happiness; the relation between understanding and happiness must be examined rather than assumed; finite material needs must be distinguished from desires; fundamental disagreements can be empirical, ethical or conceptual; and biological

explanation can have different meanings. The candidate questions are not an endorsed set of universal conclusions.

Five suggested additions to the original founding presentation were intellectual precedents, an anatomy of an agreement, standards of inquiry, institutional independence and a long-term vision across 10, 50 and 100 years. The present proposal develops those subjects; the presentation itself remains to be revised. The illustrative planning stages and the proposed long-term orientation are not commitments to dates or quantified impact. Initial review ratings were qualitative editorial assessments, not evidence or adopted metrics, and are not used to justify institutional claims.

The Claude shared conversation linked at the start was inaccessible during the original review. No unseen material from that conversation is represented as examined here. External organizations are retained as research leads; their current operating arrangements have not been independently re-verified for this document. The full conversation should be archived as an unabridged record separately; this document is a structured consolidation, not an exact transcript. Added explanatory safeguards and examples are identified as working designs or open questions, not additional accepted decisions.

Revision note: from The Third List v0.2 to The Fourth List v0.3

Version 0.2 consolidated the original 69 discussion sections. Version 0.3 preserves their substance, extends the traceability register through section 78, and revises the identity, purpose, list architecture, knowledge units, protocol, digital and offline infrastructure, AI boundaries, governance, measurement and founding process to incorporate List Four. It preserves the 18 initial inquiry questions and all previously discussed frameworks. The twelve candidate restraints and the six paired responsibility/restraint domains are preserved separately in Part IX, with no invented endorsements. Additional implementation proposals and safeguards are identified as working designs, and unresolved issues are recorded in Part XV. This document remains open to examination, including examination of the new fourth-list architecture itself.

The Charter

Source and traceability. Primary source: The Fourth List: Founding Proposal v0.3, 24 November 2026, including Appendix C (discussion sections 01–78). The original Claude shared conversation remains unavailable. The Charter is a concise constitutional extraction, not a replacement for the comprehensive proposal.

Charter source map

Each Charter article, with the founding discussion sections and Founding Proposal Parts it draws on:

- I: 38, 53, 77; Parts I and X
- II: 01, 19, 21, 38, 77; Parts I and IX
- III: 03, 04, 06; Parts I and II
- IV: 08, 27; Parts II and VIII
- V: 10, 13, 26–30, 56; Parts III, VIII and X
- VI: 05, 07, 15–18, 46; Parts II–IV
- VII: 19, 32; Parts V and IX
- VIII: 09, 21, 70–78; Parts III and IX
- IX: 22–23, 62; Parts VI and X
- X: 30, 39, 44, 60–61; Parts V, VI and XI
- XI: 35, 49–53; Parts VII and X
- XII: 24, 53, 65; Parts X and XIII

Source maps of the companion documents

Each companion document ended with a table tracing its sections to the Founding Proposal's discussion sections (now the founding decisions) and to the earlier documents. Each also noted that the shared conversation from which the Founding Proposal was consolidated was not available to its drafters.

Open Protocol

The primary sources are The Fourth List Founding Proposal v0.3 (24 November 2026, including Appendix C, discussion 01–78) and Foundational

Charter v0.1. This is an operational derivative, not a replacement for either source. The original Claude shared conversation remains inaccessible.

Protocol section	Proposal discussion / Charter article
01 Architecture	01–08, 39–42, 77 / I–VI, X
02–03 Representation and records	13, 45–46, 70–78 / VI, VIII, X
04 Semantics and questions	09–11, 13, 40, 56 / V–VI
05 Dialogue	12, 14–15, 25–30 / IV–VI
06 Verification	05, 07, 16–18 / VI
07 Lists	09–10, 17, 70–78 / VI, VIII
08 Commitments	70–78 / VIII
09 Education and living	19–21, 70–78 / VII–VIII
10 Federation	39–46, 49–53 / X–XI
11 Consent and AI	22, 32, 62, 70–78 / VII–IX, XI
12 Governance	22–24, 48–53, 60–61, 65 / IX–XII
13–14 Pilot and example	14–18, 63–65, 78 / VI, VIII, XII; new working designs

Governance Framework

Framework sections	Founding Proposal v0.3 discussion references; companion documents
01–02	22–24, 39, 44, 53–54; Charter I–VI, IX–X; Protocol 01, 12.
03–04	12, 25–30, 36, 47–48, 55–56; Charter IV–V; Protocol 05, 12.
05–06	40–44, 48–53; Charter X–XI; Protocol 03, 10, 12–13.
07–09	18, 22–23, 62, 70–78; Charter VI–IX; Protocol 07–11.
10–11	24, 32, 37, 49–53, 59–61, 65; Charter X–XII; Protocol 12.
12–13	57–58, 63–69, 78; Proposal Parts XII–XV and Appendix C; Protocol 13–15.

Primary sources: The Fourth List Founding Proposal v0.3, Foundational Charter v0.1 and Open Protocol v0.1, all dated 24 November 2026. The unavailable original Claude conversation remains outside the source material. The procedures for mandates, coordination circles, decision classes, reviews, resource pooling and pilot evaluation are new proposals, not ratified decisions. This draft has not been tested or legally reviewed. Publish for collective examination before adoption.

Platform Architecture

The table maps this proposed implementation to the source documents, not to approvals of the implementation. The founding discussion references are those recorded in the Founding Proposal v0.3, Appendix C.

Architecture section	Founding Proposal / Charter / Open Protocol / Governance Framework
01–02 Purpose and journeys	Discussion 08, 19, 21, 27, 30, 39, 44, 53, 57, 62, 77–78; Charter I–VIII, X–XI; Protocol 01, 05; Governance 01–03.
03–04 System and knowledge	Discussion 39–46, 70–78; Charter VI, VIII, X–XI; Protocol 01–04; Governance 02, 06.
05 Inquiry and lists	Discussion 09–18, 70–78; Charter IV–VI, VIII; Protocol 05–08; Governance 08.
06 Discovery	Discussion 10–11, 45–46, 56–58; Charter V–VII; Protocol 04, 07; Governance 03, 08.
07 Offline, education, living	Discussion 19–21, 30, 35, 70–78; Charter VII–VIII; Protocol 09–11; Governance 08–09.
08 Federation	Discussion 39–44, 49–53; Charter X–XI; Protocol 10, 13; Governance 05–06.
09 Governance	Discussion 22–29, 48–53; Charter IX–XII; Protocol 11–12; Governance 01–09.
10 AI	Discussion 62, 70–78; Charter IV, VI, VIII–IX; Protocol 11; Governance 09.
11 Safety and resilience	Discussion 22, 32, 42, 49, 70–78; Charter V, VIII–XII; Protocol 10–11; Governance 07–11.
12 Development and resources	Discussion 32, 39, 49, 60–65; Charter VII, X–XII; Protocol 12; Governance 05, 10– 11.
13 Pilot and evaluation	Discussion 63–65, 69, 78; Charter XII; Protocol 13–14; Governance 12.

Release recommendation: Treat this architecture as a public working design for examination by developers, facilitators, philosophers, educators and independent operators. The modular deployment, logical schema, proposed exchange contract, permissions, interfaces and pilot sequence are new recommendations. The four preceding documents were consulted in their available Markdown editions. The original Claude shared conversation remains unavailable. No code, deployment, security audit, legal review or conformance test has been completed. The next companion document is the Community Handbook v0.1.

Community Handbook

Handbook section	Source foundation
01–02	Founding Proposal Parts I, II, VII, VIII; Charter I–V, X–XI; Governance 02–03
03	Proposal Parts III–IV, VII and X (discussion 10–13, 55–56); Protocol 04
04–05	Proposal Part III (09, 14–18, 70–78); Charter IV–VI, VIII; Protocol 05–07
06	Proposal Parts II, III and IX (05, 07, 16–19); Charter VI–VII; Protocol 06, 09
07	Proposal Parts VII and IX (21, 70–78); Charter VIII; Protocol 08–09; Governance 08
08	Charter IX–XII; Protocol 11–12; Governance 07, 09–11
09	Proposal Parts V–VII and X (32, 35, 39–50, 62); Protocol 10–12; Platform 07–11
10	Proposal Parts VII, VIII and XIII (30, 35–36, 47, 55); Governance 02–03
11	Protocol 13 (T01–T12); Governance 12; Platform 13; Proposal Parts XII–XIII
12	Protocol 02–11; Governance 13; Platform 07; practical templates proposed here

The seven toolkit requirements from Founding Proposal discussion 35 are addressed in sections 01–02 (start), 04 (dialogue), 05 (agreement and disagreement), 06 (verification), 10 (assemblies), 09 (contribute to federation), and 09 and 12 (propose improvements). All four-list extensions are addressed in sections 05 and 07 and the corresponding forms.

Foundational Question Bank

Foundational source	Contribution to this bank
Founding Proposal v0.3, Appendix A; original presentation slides 11–13	Q001–Q018 verbatim.
Proposal Parts II–IV, IX, XV; discussion 04–21, 45, 56, 70–78	Founding hypotheses, methods, criteria, questions of conduct, R01–R12 and paired domains.
Foundational Charter v0.1, Articles II–VIII, X–XI	Scope, freedom, independent verification, accessibility, human conduct, federation and forks.
Open Protocol v0.1, sections 02–09, 11–15	Record vocabulary, semantics, response statuses, verification, four lists, consent and exchange.
Governance Framework v0.1, sections 04–08, 12–13	Procedural decision rights, objections, non-authority over truth, pilot review.
Platform Architecture v0.1, sections 04–10, 13–14	Versioned records, dependency views, federation, AI provenance and implementation tests.

Foundational source	Contribution to this bank
Community Handbook v0.1, sections 03–07, 09–12	Question selection, dialogue, verification, voluntary commitments, reusable forms and pilot.

Glossary

Terms as they are used in this book. Definitions follow the drafts' own wording where possible. The "See" links point to the main discussion.

Accepted hypothesis — One of the two philosophical hypotheses adopted as starting points for investigation, not as established knowledge. H1: a common reality, capable of being understood and independently verified by human beings, may exist. H2: every genuine contradiction can ultimately be resolved through sufficient understanding. See H1, H2.

Agreement — Acceptance of a precisely stated proposition (or form of conduct) by identified participants. Agreement is distinct from understanding and from verification: "Ten people may agree on something false." List One records propositions unanimously accepted by an identified group, at a specified version and scope. See What constitutes resolution?, List One.

Assembly — A periodic gathering, local, regional or world, treated as a milestone in continuing inquiry, not its beginning and end, and not the sole route for contribution, verification or recognition. See Periodic assemblies.

Candidate restraint — One of twelve statements of what "we will not" do, preserved from the founding discussion as initial candidates for collective examination. None is an adopted commitment. See Candidate restraints, Annotated in the Question Bank.

Charter — The proposed statement of the enduring purpose, commitments and freedoms of The Fourth List, in twelve articles. Offered for open examination; not adopted. See Chapter 6.

Commitment — "I voluntarily accept responsibility for acting in accordance with it." A voluntary undertaking by a person or community to a defined version of a responsibility or restraint. It is distinct from agreement and from demonstration, and signing one does not verify its grounds. See Understanding, agreement, commitment and demonstration.

Declaration of Human Commitments — A proposed living, versioned expression of List Four, identifying precisely who has agreed to or undertaken each commitment and to which version. It is not a separate fifth list, a finished ethical code or a claim to represent humanity. See A living Declaration.

Demonstration through living — The principle that where an understanding makes claims about human living, its examination remains incomplete until its implications have also been examined through living. Demonstration is voluntary and must respect consent and privacy. See Demonstration through living.

Disagreement — List Two: a public record of unresolved differences, giving the precise point of disagreement, the distinct positions, their grounds and what would be required to advance the inquiry. See List Two.

Epistemic classification — One of seven proposed statuses: question, hypothesis, articulated understanding, examinable understanding, independently verified, universally verifiable and challenged. They are not linear stages, and a label does not prove a claim. See Status of understanding, Open Protocol §06.

Federation — An architecture in which independent repositories and communities maintain their own records and exchange, discover and connect records through common standards, without a central authority. See Federated global knowledge network.

Fork — Independently reproducing, adapting and developing the openly licensed software, protocol, governance framework, educational resources, assembly methods and records, without permission. The

freedom to fork extends to the entire institutional architecture. See Freedom to fork, Freedom to reconnect.

Founding commitment — A direction explicitly accepted at the founding. It is not an adopted decision of a global community, and it remains open to examination. See Status labels, Founding decisions register.

Founding discussion — The discussion of 24 November 2026, organised in 78 numbered sections, in which the founding proposal was worked out. Its decisions and their status are listed in the founding decisions register. See Founding decisions register.

Four lists — The four distinct, interconnected public records of inquiry and conduct: agreement (what we agree on), disagreement (what we do not agree on), inquiry (what we need to understand together) and commitment (what we will do and what we will not do). See Four lists, four distinct records.

Fourth list — The record of shared human commitments: both responsibility (what participants voluntarily undertake) and restraint (what they voluntarily refuse to undertake). It gives the initiative its name. See Chapter 4.

Global Ethic — A precedent discussed around the original presentation, for preserving the differing grounds behind shared statements. [Editorial gloss: this refers to the 1993 *Declaration Toward a Global Ethic* of the Parliament of the World's Religions.] See Precedents.

Initial proposer — The person who first proposed the initiative. The drafts record which directions the initial proposer explicitly chose, and distinguish them from working designs and from decisions of any wider community. See Founding decisions register.

Inquiry — List Three, "what we need to understand together": a living collective research agenda giving each question, why it matters, its dependencies, existing attempts and possible methods. See List Three.

K4M2A — The organisation with which The Fourth List has "a connection of origin and identity, not a grant of ownership or permanent control". The number four in the name resonates with it. One proposal is for K4M2A to initiate the work and later remain a contributor; its future role

is open. [Editorial gloss, assembled from the drafts' own statements; please supply a fuller description.] See Identity and purpose, K4M2A and supporting organizations.

Madhyasth Darshan — Named in the drafts as one of the philosophical traditions whose practitioners should be able to take part, and question their own tradition, alongside materialists, idealists, Buddhists and agnostics. [Editorial gloss: a philosophy originating in India with A. Nagraj, also known as Coexistentialism.] See First principles of inquiry.

Open protocol — The public method of cooperation (human procedures as well as machine-readable specifications) that lets anyone create their own infrastructure, organize independently and collaborate through shared standards. It is defined in eight layers and must be implementable without any particular website, software, organization or founder. See The open protocol, Specification.

Original presentation — The 17-slide presentation of November 2026 that first proposed the initiative, under the earlier name *The Third List: A World Assembly of Philosophers*. It is superseded. Its content is carried into the Founding Proposal, and its 18 candidate questions are kept as Q001–Q018 in the Question Bank. See Question Bank Q001–Q018.

Pathway — A documented process through which another person can independently examine and verify a claim. It is distinct from the claim itself. A claim without an established pathway may be recorded as a hypothesis rather than verified knowledge. See Pathways to understanding.

Proposition — A claim about reality that can be expressed, examined and challenged. A conduct proposition is an examinable claim about what is appropriate for human beings to do or refrain from doing. See Fundamental units.

Resolution — In the drafts, resolution requires independent verification, not merely agreement among present participants. Five levels are distinguished: linguistic clarity, intellectual agreement, shared understanding, independent verification and universal verifiability. See What constitutes resolution?.

Response options — The five proposed answers to a precisely stated proposition: Yes, No, Undetermined, Conditional and Needs clarification. Non-response is recorded separately and is never counted as assent. See The response mechanism, Open Protocol §05.

Seven-stage dialogue — The proposed dialogue process: independent position, mutual comprehension, identification of differences, identification of foundations, collective examination, independent reassessment and documentation. It aims at understanding, not at winning a debate. See Seven-stage architecture of dialogue.

Signatory — A person who has explicitly accepted, and signed, a precise version of a proposition or commitment. Signatures belong to individuals. A signature is not verification, and an edit must never silently transfer it to a different meaning. See List One.

Third List — The initiative's earlier name ("The Third List: A World Assembly of Philosophers"), used before a fourth list of commitments was added. See Identity and purpose.

Verification — Independent examination of a claim by appropriate methods (empirical observation, logical reasoning, experimentation, self-observation, interpersonal verification and lived demonstration). It is distinct from agreement and from belief. See What constitutes verification?.

Working design — A proposal developed during drafting and retained for examination, even when it follows from a confirmed direction: a proposed mechanism, open to collective examination and local experimentation. See Status labels.

Index

Each entry links to the sections where the term is discussed. Terms marked † are defined in the Glossary.

Accepted hypothesis †: Orientation › How to read the status labels; 2 › Foundational hypothesis of common reality; 2 › Foundational hypothesis of resolvability; 18 › What remains genuinely undecided; 19 › 02 / Philosophical foundations; 19 › 10 / A smaller founding experiment; 19 › 11 / Recommended document changes and decision process; 20 › Invitation; F › Reading the register; F › Individually accepted directions and their connections

Accessibility: 5 › Universal accessibility; 6 › Article VII. Universal accessibility; 14 › Architecture of measurement; 17 › 11 / Run a founding pilot; 19 › 07 / Participation, education and progress; A › 06 / Verification and epistemic status; A › 09 / Education and living demonstration; C › 07 / Offline communities, education and living; C › 13 / MVP, acceptance tests and evolution; F › Reading the register

Agreement †: 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 16 › Organizations to learn from; 17 › 05 / Document the four lists; 17 › 07 / Examine commitments through living; 17 › 12 / Reusable toolkit; 19 › 03 / The four lists and knowledge architecture; A › 07 / Documentation and the four lists; C › 05 / Inquiry workspace and the four lists; F › Reading the register

AI: 1 › The premise: why a world assembly for human understanding?; 9 › The role of AI; 17 › 09 / Connect independent communities; 19 › 06 / Platform, interoperability and human protection; A › 11 / Consent, safety

and AI; B › 09 / Community integrity, privacy and AI; C › 03 / Logical system and deployment architecture; C › 10 / AI assistance and evaluation; C › 13 / MVP, acceptance tests and evolution; D › 01 / Original questions

Assembly †: Orientation › Names and history; 1 › Identity and purpose; 1 › What is different from a conventional conference?; 10 › Anyone can start a local initiative; 10 › Periodic assemblies and continuing inquiry; 15 › Six founding outputs; 17 › 02 / Invite and organize contributors; 17 › 10 / Convene assemblies and independent projects; B › 02 / Federated institutional architecture; F › Reading the register

Candidate restraint †: 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 6 › Article VIII. Understanding and human conduct; 6 › Drafting notes; 7 › Proposed additional record types for List Four; 10 › Local examination of commitments; 15 › Six founding outputs; 17 › 07 / Examine commitments through living; 19 › 04 / The fourth list: responsibility and restraint; C › 05 / Inquiry workspace and the four lists

Charter †: Orientation › Where the drafts appear; 6 › Drafting notes; 15 › Six founding outputs; 15 › What we are building; 15 › Recommended next steps; 17 › Community Handbook; 19 › 05 / Institutional and governance architecture; F › Reading the register; G › The Charter; G › Source maps of the companion documents

Commitment †: 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 17 › 07 / Examine commitments through living; 17 › 12 / Reusable toolkit; 18 › Additional open questions introduced by List Four; 19 › 04 / The fourth list: responsibility and restraint; A › 08 / Commitment and restraint lifecycle; B › 08 / Governance of the four lists and human commitments; D › 02 / Expanded questions; F › Reading the register

Conformance tests: Orientation › How to read the status labels; 17 › 11 / Run a founding pilot; 19 › 01 / Executive assessment; 19 › 08 / Cross-document consistency register; 19 › 09 / Proposed resolution gates and responsibilities; A › Open Protocol; A › 13 / Pilot and conformance tests; A ›

15 / Unresolved specifications; B › 12 / Pilot governance and evaluation; G › Source maps of the companion documents

Consent: 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 8 › What exactly is open?; 9 › The role of AI; 17 › 08 / Protect people and sustain the community; 17 › 12 / Reusable toolkit; 18 › What remains genuinely undecided; 19 › 03 / The four lists and knowledge architecture; 19 › 04 / The fourth list: responsibility and restraint; 19 › 06 / Platform, interoperability and human protection; A › 11 / Consent, safety and AI

Critical Review: Orientation › Where the drafts appear; Orientation › Reading paths; 15 › The founding process; 18 › What remains undecided; 19 › 01 / Executive assessment; 19 › 02 / Philosophical foundations; 19 › 03 / The four lists and knowledge architecture; 19 › 04 / The fourth list: responsibility and restraint; 19 › 05 / Institutional and governance architecture; 19 › 09 / Proposed resolution gates and responsibilities

Declaration of Human Commitments †: 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 6 › Drafting notes; 15 › Seven foundational documents; 17 › 07 / Examine commitments through living; 18 › Additional open questions introduced by List Four; 19 › 04 / The fourth list: responsibility and restraint; A › 08 / Commitment and restraint lifecycle; B › 08 / Governance of the four lists and human commitments; F › Reading the register

Demonstration through living †: 1 › Identity and purpose; 3 › Seven-stage architecture of dialogue; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 5 › Institutional models; A › 09 / Education and living demonstration; B › 08 / Governance of the four lists and human commitments; D › 07 / Record templates, review and source map; E › Illustrative fourth-list record (hypothetical); F › Reading the register; F › Individually accepted directions and their connections

Disagreement †: 2 › First principles of inquiry; 2 › Foundational hypothesis of resolvability; 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 3 › The response mechanism; 16 › Organizations to learn from; 17 › 05 / Document the four lists;

19 › 03 / The four lists and knowledge architecture; A › 07 / Documentation and the four lists; D › 01 / Original questions; D › 02 / Expanded questions

Distributed support: 13 › Economic architecture; 13 › Funding alternatives; 13 › Distributed economic architecture; 13 › Economic principles; 17 › 08 / Protect people and sustain the community; 17 › 10 / Convene assemblies and independent projects; 18 › Coherence of the accepted architecture; 19 › 05 / Institutional and governance architecture; B › 10 / Distributed economics and shared resources; F › Reading the register

Education: Orientation › Where the drafts appear; 3 › Interconnected questions; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 5 › Institutional models; 17 › 10 / Convene assemblies and independent projects; A › 09 / Education and living demonstration; D › 01 / Original questions; D › 02 / Expanded questions; F › Reading the register; G › Source maps of the companion documents

Epistemic classification †: Orientation › What The Fourth List is; 1 › Identity and purpose; 1 › Four levels of ambition; 2 › Foundational hypothesis of common reality; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 6 › Article II. Permanent purpose; 12 › Permanence of purpose; 17 › 06 / Undertake independent verification; 19 › 02 / Philosophical foundations; C › 05 / Inquiry workspace and the four lists

Federation †: Orientation › What The Fourth List is; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 9 › Architectural alternatives; 9 › Federated global knowledge network; 18 › Coherence of the accepted architecture; 19 › 06 / Platform, interoperability and human protection; C › Platform Architecture; C › 08 / Federation, exchange and reconnection; F › Reading the register; G › Source maps of the companion documents

Fork †: 12 › Freedom to fork; 12 › Freedom to reconnect; 12 › Independent identity; 13 › Funding alternatives; 15 › Seven foundational documents; 18 › Coherence of the accepted architecture; 19 › 05 / Institutional and governance architecture; 19 › 08 / Cross-document consistency register; B › 06 / Identity, compatibility, forks and reconnection; C › 08 / Federation, exchange and reconnection

Founding commitment †: 1 › Identity and purpose; 1 › Scope; 2 › Individual understanding, collective inquiry; 3 › Interconnected questions; 3 › Complete systems and individual propositions; 3 › Pathways to understanding; 5 › Universal accessibility; 5 › Demonstration through living; 18 › Coherence of the accepted architecture; G › The Founding Proposal

Founding discussion †: Orientation › Names and history; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 11 › Proposed selection capacities; 15 › Recommended next steps; 17 › 13 / Open decisions; 18 › What remains genuinely undecided; 18 › Coherence of the accepted architecture; 19 › Critical review of the founding architecture; B › Governance Framework; G › The Founding Proposal

Founding pilot: 15 › A practical founding experiment; 17 › 11 / Run a founding pilot; 17 › 13 / Open decisions; 19 › 01 / Executive assessment; 19 › 02 / Philosophical foundations; 19 › 04 / The fourth list: responsibility and restraint; 19 › 05 / Institutional and governance architecture; 19 › 10 / A smaller founding experiment; B › 12 / Pilot governance and evaluation; G › Source maps of the companion documents

Four lists †: Orientation › Where the drafts appear; 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 7 › Fundamental units of the network; 17 › 12 / Reusable toolkit; 19 › 01 / Executive assessment; 19 › 08 / Cross-document consistency register; A › 01 / Architecture and design constraints; A › 07 / Documentation and the four lists; F › Reading the register

Fourth list †: Orientation › Names and history; 1 › Identity and purpose; 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 9 › The role of AI; 10 › Independent projects; 15 › Open from the beginning; 17 › 07 / Examine commitments through living; F › Reading the register; G › The Founding Proposal

Global Ethic †: 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 16 › Organizations to learn from

Governance: Orientation › Where the drafts appear; 12 › Governance of the protocol; 16 › Organizations to learn from; 19 › 05 / Institutional and

governance architecture; A › 12 / Protocol governance and continuity; B › Governance Framework; B › 08 / Governance of the four lists and human commitments; B › 12 / Pilot governance and evaluation; C › 09 / Identity, permissions and governance; G › Source maps of the companion documents

Initial proposer †: Orientation › How to read the status labels; Orientation › Names and history; 1 › Identity and purpose; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 10 › An open infrastructure, not an organization inviting participation; 12 › K4M2A and possible supporting organizations; 13 › Funding alternatives; 18 › What remains genuinely undecided; F › Reading the register; F › Individually accepted directions and their connections

Inquiry †: 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 5 › Universal accessibility; 9 › Online and offline as complementary environments; 17 › 02 / Invite and organize contributors; 17 › 08 / Protect people and sustain the community; 18 › Coherence of the accepted architecture; 19 › 03 / The four lists and knowledge architecture; D › 02 / Expanded questions; F › Reading the register

Institutional independence: 12 › Institutional independence; 15 › Seven foundational documents; B › 01 / Governing principles and boundaries; F › Reading the register; G › The Founding Proposal

K4M2A †: Orientation › Names and history; 1 › Identity and purpose; 12 › K4M2A and possible supporting organizations; 17 › 13 / Open decisions; 18 › What remains genuinely undecided; 19 › 05 / Institutional and governance architecture; A › 15 / Unresolved specifications; B › 11 / Continuity, founding transition and safeguards; F › Reading the register; F › Individually accepted directions and their connections

Knowledge graph: 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 3 › Interconnected questions; 7 › Fundamental units of the network; 15 › Seven foundational documents; 17 › 03 / Develop a local inquiry agenda; 19 › 03 / The four lists and knowledge architecture; A › 04 / Semantics and question architecture; C › 06 / Search, graph and collective direction; D › 05 / Dependency architecture; D › 07 / Record templates, review and source map

Madhyasth Darshan †: 2 › First principles of inquiry; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 11 › Individual participation

Measurement: Orientation › Where the drafts appear; 17 › 03 / Develop a local inquiry agenda; 17 › 13 / Open decisions; 18 › What remains genuinely undecided; 19 › 07 / Participation, education and progress; D › 02 / Expanded questions; E › Illustrative records; F › Reading the register; G › The Founding Proposal

Moderation: 17 › 08 / Protect people and sustain the community; 18 › What remains genuinely undecided; 19 › 05 / Institutional and governance architecture; 19 › 09 / Proposed resolution gates and responsibilities; A › 11 / Consent, safety and AI; A › 15 / Unresolved specifications; B › 07 / Accountability, conflicts and appeals; B › 09 / Community integrity, privacy and AI; B › 12 / Pilot governance and evaluation; C › 09 / Identity, permissions and governance

Open protocol †: Orientation › Where the drafts appear; 8 › Open platform and open protocol; 18 › Coherence of the accepted architecture; B › 05 / Protocol evolution and releases; B › 12 / Pilot governance and evaluation; C › Platform Architecture; C › 04 / Knowledge model and record lifecycle; C › 08 / Federation, exchange and reconnection; F › Reading the register; G › Source maps of the companion documents

Open source: Orientation › What The Fourth List is; 6 › Article X. Decentralization and federation; 8 › Open platform and open protocol; 8 › What exactly is open?; 9 › Online and offline as complementary environments; 10 › An open infrastructure, not an organization inviting participation; 15 › Open from the beginning; 16 › Organizations to learn from; 18 › Coherence of the accepted architecture; F › Reading the register

Original presentation †: Orientation › Names and history; 1 › The premise: why a world assembly for human understanding?; 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 3 › The response mechanism; 15 › A practical founding experiment; 15 › Recommended next steps; 16 › Organizations to learn from; D › Foundational Question Bank; G › The Founding Proposal; G › Source maps of the companion documents

Pathway †: 3 › Pathways to understanding; 3 › Status of understanding; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 5 › Universal accessibility; 8 › Eight protocol layers; 11 › Contributions beyond philosophy; 17 › 06 / Undertake independent verification; 17 › 12 / Reusable toolkit; A › 09 / Education and living demonstration; C › 02 / Users, journeys and product surfaces

Proposition †: 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 3 › The response mechanism; 3 › Complete systems and individual propositions; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 17 › 03 / Develop a local inquiry agenda; 17 › 07 / Examine commitments through living; 17 › 12 / Reusable toolkit; A › 05 / Dialogue and participation; A › 08 / Commitment and restraint lifecycle; C › 05 / Inquiry workspace and the four lists

Prosperity: 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 17 › 03 / Develop a local inquiry agenda; 17 › 12 / Reusable toolkit; A › 14 / Worked inquiry and exchange example; D › 01 / Original questions; D › 02 / Expanded questions; D › 06 / Inquiry procedure and pilot; E › Illustrative records; E › Alternative illustrative signed record; E › Illustrative fourth-list record (hypothetical)

Reconnection: 6 › Article XI. Freedom to contribute, fork and reconnect; 12 › Freedom to reconnect; 15 › Seven foundational documents; 17 › 01 / Start an independent community; 17 › 09 / Connect independent communities; 18 › What remains genuinely undecided; 18 › Coherence of the accepted architecture; A › 10 / Federation, identity and interoperability; B › 06 / Identity, compatibility, forks and reconnection; C › 08 / Federation, exchange and reconnection

Resolution †: 2 › Foundational hypothesis of resolvability; 2 › What constitutes resolution?; 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 3 › Prioritization criteria; 3 › Seven-stage architecture of dialogue; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 19 › 02 / Philosophical foundations; A › 06 / Verification and epistemic status; B › 04 / Decision rights and practical resolution; F › Reading the register

Response options †: 3 › The response mechanism; 17 › 04 / Conduct a philosophical dialogue; 17 › 05 / Document the four lists; 17 › 12 / Reusable toolkit; 19 › 03 / The four lists and knowledge architecture; 19 › 08 / Cross-document consistency register; A › 05 / Dialogue and participation; A › 07 / Documentation and the four lists; C › 05 / Inquiry workspace and the four lists; D › 06 / Inquiry procedure and pilot

Responsibility and restraint: 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 6 › Article VIII. Understanding and human conduct; A › 08 / Commitment and restraint lifecycle; B › 08 / Governance of the four lists and human commitments; C › 05 / Inquiry workspace and the four lists; D › Foundational Question Bank; D › 04 / Responsibility and restraint; F › Reading the register; F › Individually accepted directions and their connections

Seven-stage dialogue †: 3 › The response mechanism; 3 › Seven-stage architecture of dialogue; 10 › Anyone can start a local initiative; 15 › A practical founding experiment; 17 › 04 / Conduct a philosophical dialogue; 17 › 10 / Convene assemblies and independent projects; A › 01 / Architecture and design constraints; A › 05 / Dialogue and participation; B › 04 / Decision rights and practical resolution; D › 06 / Inquiry procedure and pilot

Signatory †: 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 17 › 05 / Document the four lists; 17 › 11 / Run a founding pilot; 17 › 12 / Reusable toolkit; 19 › 03 / The four lists and knowledge architecture; 19 › 04 / The fourth list: responsibility and restraint; A › 03 / Record envelope, provenance and revision; A › 07 / Documentation and the four lists; D › 06 / Inquiry procedure and pilot

Third List †: Orientation › Names and history; 1 › Identity and purpose; 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; F › Individually accepted directions and their connections; G › The Founding Proposal

Verification †: 3 › Status of understanding; 5 › Institutional models; 17 › 05 / Document the four lists; 17 › 06 / Undertake independent verification; 19 › 02 / Philosophical foundations; A › 06 / Verification and epistemic

status; C › 13 / MVP, acceptance tests and evolution; D › 07 / Record templates, review and source map; F › Reading the register; G › Source maps of the companion documents

Working design †: Orientation › How to read the status labels; 2 › First principles of inquiry; 3 › Four lists, four distinct records; 4 › The fourth list: what we will and will not do; 10 › Anyone can start a local initiative; 12 › Governance of the protocol; B › Governance Framework; F › Reading the register; G › The Founding Proposal; G › Source maps of the companion documents

Working groups: 7 › Fundamental units of the network; 11 › Proposed permanent open working groups; 16 › Organizations to learn from; 17 › 10 / Convene assemblies and independent projects; B › 02 / Federated institutional architecture; B › 03 / Participation and assignment of responsibility