



# Centre for the Future

Summary Document



# CENTRE FOR THE FUTURE

*How can we make the world work for 100 per cent of humanity in the shortest possible time through spontaneous co-operation without ecological damage or disadvantage to anyone? - Buckminster Fuller*

Centre for the Future is a globally networked enterprise focused on finding practical yet culturally benign solutions to Buckminster Fuller's challenging question. Formed in partnership with some of the most insightful thinkers of our time, we intend leading a 100 year *mindful uprising* of leaders everywhere – helping them to or reinvent systems that are collapsing under the weight of a population exceeding seven billion people. Our purpose is to define, design and curate a viable world-system within which the truest expressions of what it means to be human can be realised.

## Why We Matter

Humanity has reached a crossroads in its development. Many things we take for granted are under threat. Some of our most life-critical systems are in a state of imminent collapse. It is our belief that the human species must urgently change its beliefs and amend its ways if future generations are to enjoy a world worth inheriting. If we continue blindly on our partisan paths, choosing quick and easy fixes, almost everything we cherish will perish.

Surely a wiser alternative is to make better use of our abundant ingenuity to develop conscious transitions into a future that benefits the entire human family? A future we actually choose, rather than one foisted upon us or that we stumble into. A future capable of fulfilling our most noble intentions rather than one that harbours malice and animosity. One we can all welcome with open hearts and minds.

But how can we do that when we have been taught to reason in ways that, even when we feel we are being innovative, often just reproduce the structures we claim to be reinventing? The key has to be in finding ways to *transcend* the beliefs that anchor us in destructive practices even after their toxic nature has become evident. Centre for the Future seeks to install a healthier, more empathic worldview - both in our dealings with each other and in our relationship to planet Earth. A worldview where the reframing of conventional practices can be openly embraced and where barriers to human health and well-being are eradicated to be replaced by more enduring alternatives.

We only tackle big picture issues concerning humanity and its activities. In order to be successful we need to shift a great deal of our capital, in all its forms, away from parochial, shortsighted preoccupations, into more civilisation-advancing, second-order change endeavours.

To this end the Centre is not a passive observer. Unconstrained by orthodox boundaries imposed by geography, ethnicity, creed or specialty, our work manifests at the edge of evolution, helping to shape future conditions that benefit greater numbers of people.

## What We Do

In directing our attention to comprehending and resolving complex, long-term, global issues in ways that benefit a majority of humanity, we have three primary functions. Over a period of 100 years we seek to:

- Reframe obsolete beliefs, assumptions and practices that comprise the current civilisational *worldview* and subsequent *world-system*
- Prototype and support scalable projects that inject hope and validate new sets of beliefs

- Encourage and embed viable practices that reify these new beliefs.

In order to help us achieve and apply these emotional, psychological and practical advances we use a polyocular discovery and prototyping framework, named after the navigational practices of ancient Micronesian societies.

*Wayfinding* invites people from all walks of life into a forensic interrogation of the most profound structural challenges impacting society and life on our planet. This is a dialogical and collaborative design experience - a *knowledge amplifier* where the past is reinterpreted, current systems transformed, and entirely new proposals constructed - all from a deeper awareness of what really matters for current and future generations.

*Wayfinding* is undertaken using high-tech immersive visualisation platforms for analysing unstructured data in real-time and perceiving issues through a range of alternative lenses and perspectives. This helps us explore a more expansive and in-depth interpretation of time and space. It honours the deep *past* while imagining the deep *future* - pulling both into an expanded now pregnant with alternative options that might otherwise remain obscured and out of reach.

## Our Philosophy

**A Mindful Uprising** is both a philosophy and an operating agenda for translating the experience of *wayfinding* into applying new constructs, systems and practices that are ecologically benign, culturally desirable, economically feasible, socially acceptable and morally defensible, across and within six theatres of human activity:

- Power & Governance – How can we collaborate and self-organise in ways that advance our humanity, resolve differences peacefully, and use knowledge intelligently in the pursuit of enlightened coevolution?
- Socialisation & Learning – How can we challenge our ideas and discover new wisdom that can be shared and used for the benefit of humanity as a whole?
- Landscapes & Ecologies – How can we live in partnership with nature, using our resourcefulness to reduce waste and to step more lightly on the Earth?
- Cultures & Communities – How can we ensure that human diversity is valued in a world-system where we all live abundantly and empathically with each other?
- Economics & Production – How can we redesign the practices of economic production and distribution to ensure that wealth is shared more equitably and that poverty is consigned to history?
- Intelligence & Technologies – How can we develop technologies that align with natural laws while providing humanity with the means to prosper materially and emotionally?

## Reinventing the Worldview

Centre for the Future exists for one purpose: to overcome the inertia in the current *world-system* that favours the status quo, by improving the health and well-being of more people, in ways that lead to greater empathy, cooperation and peaceful coexistence, in a society that remains esthetically and culturally diverse, and on a planet containing sufficient natural resources to provision for all of humanity's needs – now and for generations to come.

Our founding impulse for establishing Centre for the Future, and the rationale for taking such a radical philosophical position, are one and the same. It is because:

- there is mounting irrefutable evidence, that fewer people are able to benefit from the way our current *world-system* favours certain groups – particularly because of the manner in which wealth is owned, produced and distributed
- that inequality and injustices are still considered inevitable and *natural* phenomena
- that these trends indicate a collapse in the efficacy of the *worldview* itself
- that certain aspects of the *worldview* therefore must be inherently flawed
- that a different, more advanced and sophisticated *worldview* is needed if we are to realise our vision of a better future for more people
- that in order to create such a future we must challenge the most fundamental tenets within the current *worldview* – including the view that the current cadre of leaders see themselves as the solution - and be prepared to redesign our most *life-critical* systems and processes accordingly.

This core philosophy, driven by the bold hope that things must change, shapes our approach to each and every grand challenge we undertake and acts as a framework guiding our choice of projects, locations, learning partners and sponsors.

## Our Greatest Challenge

All project and outreach activities undertaken by Centre for the Future intersect in ways that contribute to a unique set of experiences aimed at evolving the human story and its practices on this planet. The point of intersection is manifest in four fundamental questions that inform and underlie all of our inquiry and design:

- *What does it mean to be human in the Anthropocene age?*
- *What will it take for humanity to coevolve to higher levels of consciousness?*
- *How can we expedite our ability to reach (for) that threshold faster?*
- *What is the story of the new worldview?*

Our source project investigates the fundamentals in these big questions. *What Does It Mean To Be Human* is our flagship initiative - profoundly distinctive from all other projects we may undertake in that it sets out to proclaim the normative *world-system* we want to create.

During the course of this project we study the evolution, structural events, driving forces and dynamics of the civilisational *worldview*, including its successes and failures, reviewing these through a variety of cultural lenses in order to reveal the new rules, values and practices that are desirable if we are to create a more viable and equitable world-system.

Within its defiantly hopeful discourse we observe the most appropriate beliefs, logics, values and qualities defining the desired world-system. Ultimately *What Does It Mean To Be Human* fleshes out a new narrative – a destiny story that can guide the advancement of our species and a star chart for navigating successive “grand challenges” that will invariably obstruct our path.

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