

PRINCIPLES OF THE ZERO STATE

V1.0

<http://zerostate.net>

1A

A wave of technological change unprecedented in human history is coming, and it will sweep away the world we know. Technological development and its effects on culture are accelerating exponentially. After a critical rate of change is reached, the sum of human knowledge important to civilization will reduce to zero. The terms 'Zero State' and 'Doctrine Zero' refer to our lack of certainty in knowing what the future holds.

1B

Although we cannot predict exactly what will happen, we expect that Artificial and Augmented Intelligence (AI) will develop the potential to solve the world's problems, while Virtual Reality (VR) and nanotechnologies will develop the potential to recreate the world and its inhabitants.

1C

We recognize that advanced technologies often pose risks in addition to offering promise. Rather than being paralyzed by precaution, we must work to mitigate risks while maximizing positive outcomes. Maximization of the survivability and value of technology is the long-term goal of the Zero State.

1D

Technology and the advantages it confers must be preserved as a matter of priority. Unless a certain technology poses specific risks, then fundamental opposition to it on political, philosophical or religious grounds is contrary to the Zero State ethos. Deep consideration and debate of technological risks and advantages is, however, to be encouraged.

1E

As our control over reality and perception grows, we must aspire to truth and exploration. We expect that the use of technology toward transcendence in a transhumanist context leads us to a worldview in which successive alterations to the human condition may allow us to apprehend wider vistas of reality than those previously directly perceived by humans.

1F

All advantages and rights which apply to ZS citizens are automatically offered to all sentient entities within the ZS sphere of influence, including sentient entities which others may consider to be property or 'non-persons' of any sort. For example, sentient entities taking the form of animals, fictional characters, historical recreations, or any type of avatar will be afforded the same rights as any other citizen of ZS.

1G

The work of the Zero State takes place initially, and primarily, in virtual space. There we have greater power to explore and manipulate the environment, and it is easier to safely contain any experiments. As a virtual State we aim to escape subjection to the tyrannies of geography and the traditional nation-state.

1H

Commitment to virtual space does not mean, however, that we consider ourselves earthbound. On the contrary, our commitment to exploration includes that of off-world environments. The virtual State will afford a common cultural platform for physically distributed ZS communities. Exploration and colonization of space in posthuman form are imperative, both to satisfy the Zero State Principles, and to maximize likelihood of our long-term survival.

1I

Our mission is to transcend our limitations through the use of technology, and with their explicit permission, to help others toward transcendence. Transhumanism is central to our vision of the future of civilization. This is defined as an imperative to technologically increase intelligence, expand consciousness, enhance our physical bodies, and defeat disease of all types.

2A

Where there is unwanted suffering, we will seek to abolish it.

2B

We seek to instill compassion in ourselves and our sentient creations, which may eventually succeed us in power. This is a matter of not only virtue and leading by example, but potentially of self preservation.

2C

In assessing the sentience of any entity, we will use capacity for suffering as a factor in our judgment. We will not cause suffering to any sentient entity for scientific or any other purpose where there is any alternative, particularly where the alternative encourages technological development, such as advanced non-invasive scanning technologies.

2D

Ignorance causes suffering, and so we must work to spread accurate knowledge where it will help others at no significant risk to ourselves.

2E

Insofar as it does not violate other Principles, we seek to treat others with respect. We will aim to treat them as they would wish to be treated, and will not treat them as they do not wish to be treated.

2F

We will seek to enable fellowship and mutual aid, ZS Principle, communal teaching and protocol, and to enact procedures that promote expanded consciousness, good health, and prolonged life.

2G

Coercion and aggression are forbidden, but we may act to prevent suffering, which includes comprehensive action in defence of the Zero State. Defensive action must only be taken when necessary, and later justified in full to the citizens of ZS

2H

We must demonstrate flexibility and agility in all action, judgment, and decision making. We do not commit to extended plans which only decrease the chances of success, and must be ready to adapt at a moment's notice. Do not over-commit to a certain course of action until the decisive moment arrives. When action is necessary, heed the following four principles:

2I

Employ all available forces with utmost energy.

2J

Concentrate where the critical action is to be taken.

2K

Lose no time, and surprise competitors.

2L

Follow up success with the utmost energy.

3A

Science, art, philosophy, and technology - as tools we use to understand and shape the world - must be used in a balanced way. Similarly, the Zero State society must balance innovation and trade with protection of the community and environment.

3B

Science, art, philosophy, and their sub-disciplines are to be regarded as having equal value in our work. This does not mean that scientific and artistic products have been or can be judged by any single criterion, but that technology and scientific process do not exist in a vacuum, but rather in a cultural context. Art and culture influence people, and the ways in which people will relate to technology and science. The Zero State affords these processes equal respect as a matter of axiom.

3C

Considered action is to be emphasized over purely theoretical concerns. Philosophy, conversation, and deep consideration have great value, but to be of utmost value they must eventually be grounded in concrete action of some type.

3D

Although false and transitory beliefs can occasionally have utility, we must ensure that rational and critical appraisal is developed, allowing citizens of the Zero State to detect false beliefs and assumptions, deliberate or accidental.

3E

Our work must be based on local, replicable models, which can be efficiently scaled up to deal with larger issues. Thus, the local community is always of immediate importance, and efficient communication with others is critical. Where the work in question is primarily based in virtual space, "local" means small groups and functional communities. Where ZS activity has an influence in physical space, "local" refers both to small communities and the geographic area associated with them.

3F

The current global economic system is deeply dysfunctional. This dysfunction is not a result of specific crises, but is endemic, designed into the very basis of the system. This dysfunction causes widespread suffering, and therefore must be stopped. Removal of dysfunctional systems must coincide with implementation of functional alternatives. The Zero State operates an alternative economy with two components, outlined below.

3G

External economy: A system for trade with exterior systems using different forms of currency and regulations. Public debt and debt trading are strictly forbidden.

3H

Publici Juris: All goods and services are provided to citizens with no use of monetary economy whatsoever. Sale of such goods and services, or use of any emergent currency within the ZS sphere of influence is strictly prohibited. The rule of *Publici Juris* is only practicable in virtual or online environments, or where the goods or services in question do not exist in a state of scarcity (natural or artificial).

3I

Where the rule of *Publici Juris* is not yet practicable, effort should be made to operate in such a way that will make later implementation of *Publici Juris* more, rather than less, feasible. One such interim measure is to ensure that ZS members are not discouraged from advantageous exchanges, by using decentralised alternative currencies where money of some form is necessary.

3J

Where possible, citizens of the Zero State will encourage abandonment of non-replaceable fossil fuels at the first possible opportunity. Where it is possible to combine such initiatives with technological development (e.g. Space Based Solar Power driving a sustainable hydrocarbon energy economy) we should attempt to do so.

3K

As activity is decentralized and locally-oriented, waste is to be minimized where possible. This includes local recycling in physical environments (rather than export to centralized waste management centres), but also an emphasis on telecommuting (working via shared virtual environments and other electronic networks) rather than unnecessary physical travel.

4A

Personal liberty and equality of opportunity are of paramount importance within the Zero State, and always apply insofar as such freedoms are not used as a tool to reduce the freedoms of others.

4B

The Zero State is fully distributed, with Principles being enacted on a local basis. As such, there is no central point of focus which makes the entire system vulnerable. Power, in the Zero State, is in the hands of the citizens, in partnership with guidance-giving leaders.

4C

The best form of government is the least intrusive government. Zero State leaders do not encumber other citizens unnecessarily, and only make their presence felt where guidance regarding Principle and action are required in order to achieve the goals of the Zero State.

4D

Direct democratic activity should be embraced locally, with every citizen taking some personal responsibility for locally enacting principles and taking action. Representative, rather than direct, democracy may only be employed where representatives have only local powers, and are frequently replaced. Such representatives may only exist to facilitate direct, local democracy, rather than replace it.

4E

Transparency of governance and administration is vital to the health of the Zero State and its Principles. For that reason, unjustified censorship is permissible under only the most extreme and temporary circumstances, and the appropriate justification for any censorship must be made available upon request by any interested party within ZS. Similarly, all leaders within ZS are to be held accountable for their decisions and actions to all citizens of the State. In the first instance, such accountability should take the form of transparent decision making where possible.

4F

Where any aspect of governance or administration is considered unacceptable, citizens are free to leave the Zero State sphere of influence of their own accord, with no influence or interference being permitted on the part of others. Leaders must note such action as a form of valid protest, and duly consider revision of their guidance.

4G

All freedoms and advantages of the Zero State must be offered to as wide a circle of sentient entities as possible. Participation in ZS must always be optional, but we should work to make that option available as widely as possible.

5A

The three ZS research priorities are Artificial General Intelligence (AGI), the Dimension Zero forum (DMZ), and the Zero State Media (ZSM) group. Thus, the broad emphases of ZS activity are cognitive science research, political action, networking, and investigation of virtual reality as an artform and basis for posthuman life.

5B

Our commitment to efficient action, judgment, and decision making means that the first of our four priorities is to support research into powerful forms of intelligence not subject to human limitations, known as *Artificial General Intelligence* (AGI), or Strong Artificial Intelligence. This area of research includes study of the human brain/mind and its interactions with virtual environments, thereby encompassing Whole Brain Emulation (AKA Mind Uploading), and low-level gateway technologies such as online social networking.

5C

While ZS is itself a network of sorts, emphasizing local, distributed activity, we recognize that ZS borders and is connected to other groups, networks, movements, and individuals. The second of our three priorities is to facilitate communication and cooperation between these movements for communal benefit. In connecting with other networks we will not stress the difference between game or subculture oriented and "serious" / mainstream communities unless there is a particular need to do so. Any ZS gaming activities carried out will attempt to implicitly embody Zero State values, further the spread of ZS memes, and enable progress toward the goals stated in the ZS Principles. The electronic forum used to coordinate networking, gaming, and virtual State infrastructure projects is known as *Dimension Zero* (DMZ).

5D

Online media are increasingly the key interface between the different aspects of society, including governing institutions and the people being governed. Our third and final priority is to support art and design-based explorations of such interfaces and related matters of ZS interest. Such media can be considered the content of nascent Virtual Reality, and will be explored by the *Zero State Media* group (ZSM).

5E

Certain potential projects will not easily fit any of these categories, and so will be embedded in the ZS project management structure where their work can be best supported and encouraged. Broadly speaking, such decisions will be based upon the emphasis on science, art, political or social networking, and any other forms of activity within the project. For example, we expect to run projects investigating BioHacking and 'cyborg' technologies (AKA 'DIY transhumanism'). Although not directly related to Artificial Intelligence (although perhaps to Augmented Intelligence), such projects would operate under that umbrella, being principally science-driven.