

The Intelligent Ecosystem

Life and Society in a Superintelligent Era

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How can growing intelligence improve the conditions of life for people and other living beings?

Powerful artificial intelligence becomes useful through a larger world: people, institutions, resources, and living systems. The Intelligent Ecosystem examines how their connections can support shared learning, dependable provision, and a meaningful voice in the decisions that shape our lives.

The book takes superintelligence as an analytical premise: systems that exceed human performance across a broad range of important cognitive activities and can improve significant aspects of their own operation and development. It explores the responsibilities such capability would create, without claiming that these systems already exist or predicting their arrival.

What an Intelligent Ecosystem means

An Intelligent Ecosystem is an evolving network of humans, artificial intelligences, institutions, technologies, and living systems through which knowledge is developed, capabilities are improved, resources are coordinated, and actions change the conditions of life.

Three lenses for judging improvement

Better understanding. What do we have stronger reasons to believe?

Better capabilities and methods. What can we do more reliably, and how can we improve the way we learn?

Better conditions of life. Who benefits, who bears a burden, and what happens to agency and the living world?

These lenses overlap, but evidence of progress through one cannot establish progress through another.

From the argument to practice

Two continuing design investigations make the argument concrete: connecting an assessment to dependable care, and protecting a watershed while meeting human needs. Both are proposed designs informed by separate studies. They expose choices about follow-through, limited resources, fair representation, ecological integrity, and the authority to revise a decision.

For general readers, the book offers questions with which to examine promises of improvement. For builders, it connects technical capability to the conditions of use. For decision-makers, it links authority and resources to obligations that endure after deployment. Twenty chapters, eight visuals, and nine practical worksheets combine philosophy, research, and design.

The ambition is an ecosystem in which growing capability gives more lives room to go well, and those living within it retain the means to shape what happens next.