

The following is a thought experiment. While the vision itself might leap unceremoniously into the fantastic, remember that the economic lift from artificial superintelligence of the kind predicted as early as 2027, and the tech advancements it confers, will herald an avalanche of economic wiggle room. But it will also go hand in hand with an avalanche of job displacement. These three elements — economic boom, job upheaval, and tech advancement make envisioning this future exciting, but also vital. And if we don't envision this future, who will?

The format of this thought experiment is a proposal. Its goal is to drive discussion. We don't necessarily need this vision, but we do need a vision. Any vision. This is why I say thought experiment.

(Don't worry - this not Marxism. In fact, it depends on a global open market economy).

THE BIG ANNOUNCEMENT

Imagine that you, and everyone else in your country, wakes up one morning to a message. It is from your government, and says that as of next month you will be receiving a basic living allowance in line with your needs. This allowance will be sufficient to enjoy a comfortable existence with some spending power (necessary for the economy). The letter stresses that this allowance is intended to compensate for the loss of work to be caused by the rolling out of ARC AI (the name they give for the recently approved superintelligence systems).

Sure enough, your boss announces that employees are going to no longer be needed in your firm, but that you are welcome to continue working if you choose, and for as long as you like. Although your government-funded allowance will replace your salary, there are supplementary bonuses for those who continue to show some value in the workplace.

Those who do choose to quit their job might also wish for access to supplementary funds — and to do something with their newfound freedom. What options exist for them?

PURSUIITS OF HAPPINESS

The definition of work was once manual labour. Only relatively recently did it expand to include working at desks. Work is set to expand again in the era of ARC AI - *pursuits* are the new jobs.

Humankind is for the most part only content when contributing value through effort. Some may be content with leisure, which itself will offer opportunities for supplementary income if shared in some way or serving a societal function. Others might be content raising a family, which will also generate additional income, providing certain criteria are met for the care of one's own. Here is an incomplete overview of pursuits that will be available in the AI age, falling into three broad categories: Manual, Societal and Academic.

Manual pursuits*

Food preparation. New restaurants will be subsidised where there is a proven need in the locale.

Crafts. If you make things that sell, kudos to you. There is still a commercial economy, and individual expression and talent will always be accompanied by appeal.

Environmental work - while broader environmental policy falls under the Societal category, much is needed to enact those policies - whether it is safeguarding protected species or restoring habitats. This also goes for the general upkeep of a landscape or community. Any jobs people do not want to do — litter collection, for example — can be left to ARC AI robots, but much pruning, preening and beautifying is a pleasurable pursuit preserved for those who seek it.

Allotment farming - community-serving vegetable gardens and livestock paddocks will be kept by those who wish to. The advances in fusion energy will ultimately make ubiquitous local organic farming commonplace.

Building masters

Repair masters

Societal pursuits*

Raising a family

Entertainment - whether music, film, theater, dance, video games or the arts, one sector of our lives which remains mostly cordoned off from AI is the creative sector. People still pay for entertainment in this world, and profits are largely distributed among the creators in the same way as today, alongside the bonuses given to those who helped realise those dreams.

Care work

Journalism

Sports provision

Teaching

Policy work - it is vital that decisions affecting society come from the people belonging to those societies. Steering the ship of village, town, country, region or world is a job that will be defined by its transience — there is no perfect where public policy is concerned — no end goal — only today, and to come. These public sector jobs will largely resemble the existing governmental institutions of today, and ARC AI will serve only an advisory and administrative support role.

Crime prevention - policing will be much more community focused, and crime will have never been more unpopular.

Academic

— ARC AI might be the best research assistant you can't have affairs, quarrel or drink with (usually in a different order) but in the same way that policy design needs human direction, so does research. Built upon our cumulative legacy of learning, ARC AI itself is proof that we are what we know and consequently create, and it is our human desire for knowledge which will define our next future. Universities will forge our next paths, while also returning to their legacy role as conduits of culture and enlightenment more than drivers of economies; while...

— ...Colleges will train people for the many vocations still alive and kicking in the ARC world.

*when engaging in pursuits that serve to advance or protect human well being, cultural heritage or the environment, contributors might be awarded additional funding as determined by their nation's policymakers.

FAQs

— so how does the economy work again? ARC AI is too powerful for human workforces to manage without it. As so, it receives maximum insertion into the commercial system, generating high grade products and services at minimal cost (multiple industrial revolutions in just a few years) while also displacing workforces en masse. Government taxation on this increase in wealth is then funneled into a ballooning public sector, which finances the base allowances and the pursuits of happiness, many of which themselves generate more wealth.

— erm... the global south? The privilege described assumes by proxy of our humanity that the global south's ramp into this support plateau is firmly established. The ARC AI revolution requires cultural and technological benchmarks which will be the first priority.

— sounds like a utopian idea with an underbelly of horror waiting to happen. Nothing stays the same. Researchers will be ensuring horrors are avoided, minimised, or swiftly moved away from. The important thing is for society to collectively decide on a path for growth, as 2025 forces are not leading us in a very pleasing direction (understatement of the freaking century).

— what does "in line with their needs" mean? If I have a mansion and servants, I receive more money? The pivotal issue here is softening the impact of AI adoption at scale. Naturally there are disparities in ownership and lifestyle as we make this jump, but the only way everyone is going to come on board with a unified vision is if we do not make mass redistribution of wealth its primary feature. This is redistribution of work. As so, the current status quo will provide the

starting markers — only with two caveats: no one will be poor anymore - the newly generated wealth will be distributed (not REdistributed) so that the traditionally poor are the newly comfortable. Meanwhile, if any pursuer of happiness generates an inordinate amount of wealth, tax on higher brackets will go up as agreed by the voting public to allow for political differences to hold sway.

Okay...

So does this vision have enough in it to warrant pursuit? If yes, any advice on fixing the flaws or fantasy overreach? Any more ideas? If no, does anyone feel like trying out a better idea?