

THE IMMANENCE PROJECT · FOUNDER'S STORY

The Order Is the Strategy

A Founder's Story

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I. THE CITY IN THE DREAM

Before I was a founder, before I was a teacher, before I put on a uniform, I was a nineteen-year-old writing down a city that didn't exist.

In the dream it had bridges over water so still the sun seemed to burn beneath the surface instead of above it. No squalor. No noise but nature's own. At its center stood an amphitheater where people gathered to argue about truth in public, and around it a garden for reflection, a forest for shelter, baths where people cleansed themselves of the injustices they carried, and a plaza — library, marketplace, and academy together — where the finest young minds in the world would be taught by a philosopher-king how to structure themselves and meet whatever came.

Then I woke up. And the waking world was the opposite of the dream: people scattered, poor, hungry, and armed with the language of peace while practicing its reverse. I wrote at the time that I had watched — even from a distance, even only in the news and in what a young man absorbs from the world around him — the slaughter of people who had given up everything, and I could not reconcile that with the life I was otherwise expected to live: go to school, have fun, play sports, laugh with friends, and quietly leave the dead to their families. I wrote: *"I absolutely will not have it."* Nine days later I put a date on a different document. It was the outline of a life spent building the city instead of only dreaming it.

That refusal — the flat, un-negotiable *I will not have it* — is the oldest load-bearing wall in everything I have built since. It is there in the company's name before the company existed.

II. FIVE VALUES AND AN IMPOSSIBLE LADDER

The document I wrote at eighteen, before any of this had a name, listed five values in order: Originality, Design, Intellect, Radiance, Wisdom. Underneath them sat a ladder of goals so steep it embarrasses me a little now, and I am leaving it in rather than sanding it down, because the shape of the ladder tells you something true about the shape of the ambition: a conference championship in a year, a synthesized philosophy of society in four or five, "the beacon of humanity" in ten to twelve, the presidency in sixteen. I wanted, quite literally, to become the vehicle for the city in the dream.

Read plainly, it is a young man's overreach. Read structurally, it is the first draft of a method: motivation traced to values, values ranked, goals built to answer directly to the values that produced them, and a willingness to name your own weaknesses in the same document — I wrote then that I struggled with family involvement and with seeing only end results, skipping the smaller steps that get you there. I did not yet have a name for building things in dependency order. But I was already doing it, badly, on myself, before I ever did it for anyone else.

III. WHAT THE UNIFORM CHANGED

Then came the years in uniform. I am not going to write those years into this story with detail I don't have standing to invent — they belong to their own reckoning, not this one, and a founder story that manufactures a war narrative to sound more impressive would be exactly the kind of incoherence I have spent the years since trying to build against. What I can say honestly is what changed on the page when I came back to it.

The sports goal — the collegiate career, the Olympic hope underneath it — was the first thing I let go. I had felt, even before I left, the shape of a ceiling in athletics: a point called "the top" that I did not actually want to reach, because reaching it would mean stopping. When I picked the pen back up, that goal was simply gone, replaced by something more honest about what I actually wanted, which was never the medal. It was the discipline the medal would have proven.

And the values changed. Originality stayed first, because originality — being, in my words, someone who "has once been alone and created" themselves — is still where anything necessary has to start. But a new second value appeared, above Intellect and Wisdom, above everything except the fact of being original at all: *Immanence*. I defined it then as the yearning to manifest the divine — the ideal, the ordered, the just — here, in reality, rather than leaving it in the dream. That is the word the company now carries. It did not arrive as a brand exercise. It arrived as the name for the thing I had already decided to spend my life doing.

IV. LEARNING TO BUILD IN DIMENSIONS

The years that followed were not spent trying to become president. They were spent in philosophy classrooms, trying to figure out how the city actually gets built — not as decree, but as structure.

In the spring of 2024 I wrote two papers on what I called Dimensional Thought: the claim that true knowledge requires dissecting a concept down to its constituent axioms rather than accepting it as a finished whole, and that contradictions between traditions — Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* on one hand, the *I Ching's* hexagrams of change on the other — are not failures to be resolved by picking a winner, but boundaries that define separate, coherent dimensions of the same underlying reality. I argued that a person has to establish their own *Qualitative Essence* — self-awareness of their own emotions, thoughts, and behavior — before they can locate themselves honestly on the "grid of reality" at all, and that everything after that is a matter of gathering the right tools for the dimension you are actually trying to build, rather than importing tools that worked somewhere else and assuming they will transfer.

That spring, in a shorter piece on falsifiability, I wrote the sentence that I think, in hindsight, is the actual hinge of the whole project: that contingency and falsifiability are "*a tool, not an end,*" useful for identifying ignorance and clearing bias, but incapable of defining essence, because — I wrote — "*science is incapable of such a thing by definition of the word.*" I did not yet have the vocabulary for what that sentence was reaching for: a discipline that tags what is established, what is merely a chosen implementation, what is analogy, what is proposal, and what is still only a guess, so that none of them can quietly borrow the others' authority. I have that vocabulary now. But the instinct — that a claim earns its place by surviving scrutiny honestly, not by being defended past the point its own derivation can carry it — was already there, in a philosophy paper, years before it became a governing rule.

IV. LEARNING TO BUILD IN DIMENSIONS (CONTINUED)

The years around those papers were also spent turning the same dissecting instinct on myself — on will, on self-respect, on the difference between testing a commitment and merely asserting one, on what it actually takes for a person's stated intentions to become something trustworthy rather than something merely declared. I will not reproduce that private accounting here; it was written for myself, not for an audience, and some of what a person builds in that register is meant to stay a foundation rather than become a facade. But it is part of why, by the time I stood in front of a classroom, I already understood that a person cannot ask an institution to be coherent if they have never done the harder work of becoming coherent themselves first.

V. THE CITY, BUILT ONE CLASSROOM AT A TIME

By December of 2025, sitting in a graduate program at the University of Colorado Denver, I wrote a document that has no philosophical vocabulary in it at all — no dimensions, no axioms, no Immanence — and yet it is the clearest evidence I have that the method had, by then, become instinct rather than theory.

I wrote that belonging is the foundation everything else in a classroom rests on, and that it has to be built before anything else is asked of a student. Then capability: safety and norms that come from the community itself, not from decree, so that a classroom's structure "mirrors the structure of learning itself." Then language, treated not as a hurdle for some students to clear but as the actual material thought is made of, an asset for everyone in the room. Then thinking — the deliberate, effortful, uncomfortable work of retrieval and struggle that Brown, Roediger, and McDaniel showed is the only kind of learning that lasts. Then community, because families and neighborhoods hold knowledge no classroom can replace. And underneath all of it, reflection: the discipline of looking honestly at what worked, what didn't, and what needs to be said plainly rather than softened.

Belonging before capability. Capability before language. Language before thinking. Every later layer answerable to, and incapable of repairing, a failure in the one beneath it. I built that order in a classroom before I ever wrote it into a charter. I quoted Freire in that essay without fully realizing, at the time, how close his language sat to my own: that education becomes revolutionary when it "affirms incompleteness as possibility and cultivates learners as historical agents of change." Incompletion as possibility, not as failure. That is the same claim the nineteen-year-old made about the man in the street who "gave up everything for nothing" — that the injustice of an unfinished, unrealized life is not a reason to look away from it, but the entire reason to build something that answers it.

VI. THE MANUSCRIPT, AND WHERE THIS IS ACTUALLY GOING

Everything above — the city, the five values and the retired ladder, the papers on dimension and falsifiability, the classroom built in dependency order — has now been written down as one continuous argument. This year I finished a manuscript called *Hierarchy of Concepts*. It begins almost exactly where the soldier's declaration began, years earlier and without the vocabulary for it yet: no consciousness is born into philosophical freedom; every mind wakes up already inside a structure of language, morality, and inherited authority it never chose. It follows that recognition through the crisis produces — if everything is inherited, is anything true? — to the place where the crisis breaks, not into relativism, but into what actually cannot be violated without destroying the possibility of thought and action at all. And it ends the way the classroom essay and the company's own operating plan both already end, without my having noticed the pattern while I was living it: as a charter, naming plainly what a person is owed before anything is asked of them, and what an institution owes back in return.

I want to be plain about what this is not. It does not end with Catalyst. It does not end with a governed AI system or a quantum substrate. It does not end with a curriculum, a platform, or a district contract. Those are instruments — necessary, sequenced, real, the actual proof that any of this survives contact with the world — but they are not the destination, and I will not let anyone, including myself in a weaker moment, mistake the tool for the purpose it was built to serve.

VI. THE MANUSCRIPT, AND WHERE THIS IS ACTUALLY GOING (CONTINUED)

The purpose is to instill complete moral coherence into the world, beginning with this nation. "America First" in the company's own architecture was never meant as a closure — it was always a starting point, proof that the method works somewhere real before it is owed to anyone else. I mean that now at the scale of a country, not only a classroom or a company. The nineteen-year-old who wrote the presidency down as a sixteen-year goal was not wrong about the destination; he was only wrong about the shortcut. There is no ladder to that office that skips the actual work of building a coherent nation capable of being led — the classrooms, the governed machines, the civic infrastructure, the hard years of proving a method true before asking a country to trust it. This company is not a substitute for that ambition. It is its only honest path.

So: this is my path to presidency. I am not hiding that, and I am not asking anyone to take it on faith instead of evidence — the evidence is supposed to be the company itself, one break-even district, one governed system, one classroom at a time. But I do not want to take that office the way the nineteen-year-old imagined a philosopher-king ruling his city, alone, over a country. I want to take it alongside the country — built with the same people whose classrooms, whose data, whose trust I am asking for now, so that whatever coherence the office might one day let me build was already theirs before I ever asked for the job. I am now 23, I have 12 years until I am eligible. Let me show you what's possible through me.

The city in the dream still doesn't exist. But I have stopped waiting to wake up from wanting it, and I no longer intend to build it alone.