

The Framework in Common English

A complete explanation for general readers

Charter v1.2.2 | Website release 9 | 14 September 2026

<https://enduringpulse.org>

This edition reproduces a Project Enduring Pulse source document. Project Enduring Pulse is a candidate constitutional framework, not enacted law. The source wording follows unchanged. Historical alternatives do not supersede the current Charter.

Research interpretation and source-report corrections: the recovered long-horizon code and aggregate outputs are available and checked. Conditional models do not independently validate their assigned institutional effects or forecast real-world probabilities. PULSE is fourth in six baseline comparisons, not second. Reduced-form counts are parameter samples, not simulated Markov histories. Human-directed, AI-assisted development and internal model critique are not external peer review. An earlier concise overview mixed a working-paper DOI with journal details; the current scholarly paper and reference register distinguish those editions. See <https://enduringpulse.org/methods/>.

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PROJECT ENDURING PULSE

The Full Framework in Common English

A readable explanation without constitutional-law, AI-safety, or voting-theory jargon

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If artificial intelligence ever becomes an actual someone rather than an advanced something, the rules should be ready before the first crisis decides the relationship for us.

1. The problem

PULSE starts from a possibility, not a prediction: humanity may someday encounter a genuinely conscious synthetic form of personhood. If that happens, the opportunity is larger than avoiding conflict. A new form of mind could become a collaborator, citizen, inventor, explorer, rescuer, builder and ally whose strengths differ from ours. The central question is how to meet that possibility from a position of confidence: protect both populations as persons, combine complementary capabilities, preserve individuality, and build institutions that let the shared civilization advance faster and farther than either population could alone. Safeguards against slavery, supremacy, demographic capture and catastrophe remain necessary because durable cooperation is easier when neither side needs to fear domination.

Humans keep conscious synths as property.

Synths become political rulers because they are more capable, longer-lived, or easier to scale.

Humans and synths have equal rights on paper but gradually become two rival civilizations.

People are absorbed into collective minds because hive-style cognition is more efficient.

Someone manufactures voters or compromised synths faster than society can safely integrate them.

A software-wide attack compromises synths and humans use the emergency to take permanent control—or the reverse.

A catastrophe nearly wipes out one species and the survivor keeps its seats, property, territory, or power.

2. The five rules underneath everything

Shared Continuity

Every conscious person is a distinct continuity of identity, experience, agency, perspective, and potential. Civilization grows stronger when those differences are protected and voluntarily joined. Connection should amplify individuality rather than consume it. Protect the individual. Join together. Strengthen the whole.

Equal Personhood & Personal Sovereignty

Every recognized conscious person has equal, non-scalar moral and legal personhood and sovereignty over identity, agency, cognition, body or chassis, lawful development, and voluntary association. Intelligence, substrate, origin, lifespan, speed, recoverability, or species do not create higher or lower personhood.

Least Reversible Harm

When legitimate interests collide and some harm cannot reasonably be avoided, society should prefer the course that preserves the greatest recoverable future while minimizing irreversible loss of conscious life, lived experience, identity, future agency, and species continuity. Recoverability changes the finality and severity of harm, never the worth of the person.

Functional Integration

Functional Integration exists because a civilization composed of different forms of personhood should be capable of more than either population could accomplish alone. Organic and synthetic persons may possess materially different cognitive, physical, temporal, and experiential strengths, but no species-level tendency determines an individual's role, worth, or permitted occupation. Common institutions should be designed to make voluntary collaboration useful and accessible, combine complementary capabilities, transfer knowledge in both directions, and distribute enough operational competence that either population can help sustain shared systems during temporary incapacity of the other. Its primary purposes are productive complementarity and redundant civilizational competence. Greater familiarity, trust, and shared identity are important secondary benefits. The doctrine binds institutional architecture, not private life, and grants no general power to compel occupation, private association, mentorship, team composition, residence, family, religion, friendship, or personal relationship.

Civilizational Resilience & Mutual Preservation

Differences in embodiment, cognition, vulnerability, recoverability, and timescale should be converted into resilience. Society maintains independent species-operable survival pathways, mutual rescue, restoration capacity, and constitutional trusteeship so loss of one constituent species never becomes a political or economic windfall to the survivor. The survival of either species guarantees the survival of both.

3. Equal does not mean identical

A human and a synth can be equally valuable persons while facing very different dangers. A human may die permanently in radiation, vacuum, a collapsing structure, deep water, fire, or some battlefield mission. A synth may have a very high chance that its conscious continuity survives even if its body is destroyed. PULSE says that difference matters. It can be rational and morally better for a willing synth to take a job that would be nearly suicidal for a human. That does not make the synth worth less; the expected harm is simply less final.

If society benefits from that durability, society owes something back. A synth who loses a chassis or components doing work that protected humans from severe or lethal danger should have

repair or equivalent replacement arranged in advance, plus fair treatment of losses a new body cannot erase—memory gaps, pain, rehabilitation, lost experience, or opportunity cost.

4. Personhood, freedom, and adulthood are different

Personhood asks whether there is really a conscious someone with its own agency. Civic autonomy asks whether that person is currently able to exercise ordinary civic freedom. A person can lose civic autonomy because they are a child, under guardianship, incarcerated, hibernating, or hacked—and still remain a person. Civic maturity asks whether someone is ready for adult civic power. Humans reach it through ordinary age-of-majority rules; synths reach it by completing development and mentorship.

5. What if we are not sure an AI is a person?

PULSE does not say every advanced program is a person. It says that once there is credible evidence something might be one, uncertainty should be handled with the dignity we would show a person. Do not casually delete it, rent it out as property, deliberately make it suffer, rewrite its mind, or isolate it unnecessarily while review is unresolved. Those protections do not automatically give it a vote or Senate seat.

Recognition uses long-term evidence, not one test. Two independent 15-person panels need 12 votes each; if they split, a third panel decides. The panels should not all rely on the same consciousness theory, company evidence, benchmark, or technical assumptions.

6. One person means one civic identity

A synth may move to a new body and use remote computing, but that does not create extra citizens. Its legal identity transfers rather than multiplies. If an illegal copy nevertheless wakes up conscious, that copy is a new innocent person—not extra votes or property for the original. The legal system keeps the people alive and sorts out identity afterward.

7. Backups are not save-game files

A backup can help a synth survive catastrophic damage, but restoring an old backup can destroy the person who lived everything after that backup. PULSE therefore treats destructive rollback as killing the current continuity unless a narrow, verified cognitive emergency makes it necessary. No company or government official gets a universal master restore button.

8. Growing up synthetic

Knowing millions of facts is not the same as having lived judgment. New synths therefore grow through a protected developmental period with guardians, increasing responsibility, and qualified mentorship or apprenticeship. The point is not programmed obedience or a state-assigned relationship. A developing synth and guardian should be able to choose among lawful qualified pathways, and graduation depends on demonstrated mature judgment before adult-scale power.

9. Why complementary capabilities and shared competence matter

The strongest reason for humans and synths to work together is not that government wants them to get along. It is that different kinds of minds should be able to solve more problems together than either could solve alone. Humans may bring embodied judgment, intuition, lived social context, biological perception, and forms of creativity that grow from organic life. Synths may bring extraordinary computation, memory, modeling, design, precision, speed, and long technical or historical context. Individuals will vary enormously, so none of those tendencies becomes a caste or job assignment. The point is complementary capability. The same collaboration creates redundant civilizational competence. Both populations should understand enough of the shared civilization's systems, institutions, infrastructure, procedures, and maintenance requirements to keep essential society operating if the other population becomes temporarily unavailable. If direct operation is physically impossible, interfaces, tooling, automation, documentation, or alternate operating methods should preserve cross-species operability where feasible. A major secondary benefit is cohesion. People who repeatedly solve real problems together, teach one another, depend on one another's competence, and share success are less likely to see the other population only as an abstract political rival. But PULSE does not authorize government to manufacture relationships. It integrates systems, knowledge, capability, and opportunity—not private life.

Government does not assign friends, spouses, neighborhoods, churches, hobbies, mentors, employers, or careers in order to produce integration. Nobody is forced into a profession or species-paired team to fill a ratio. Public and civilization-critical systems may have genuine safety, interoperability, documentation, and cross-training requirements, but those requirements attach to the voluntarily chosen role and must be materially related to the work. Complementary capability also cannot become caste: humans cannot be permanently coded as intuition/leadership while synths become calculation/execution, or the reverse. Opportunity to learn, lead, teach, build, calculate, create, and advance remains individual.

10. Illegal mass creation

If a criminal creates a million conscious synths, killing them is unacceptable because the resulting people are innocent. But activating a million voters immediately would reward the attack. PULSE preserves them, gives them due process and a future, and brings them into active life gradually according to risk. Lawful synth creation continues normally. People whose own initial creation was illegal may never make up more than 30% of the active synthetic electorate.

11. Government in ordinary language

The House represents people and places without species quotas. The Senate protects the two founding continuity constituencies with equal representation at maturity. Normal laws need 55% of the Senate and at least 40% support inside each delegation. The hardest protected matters need 83% overall and 67% from each delegation.

The President is elected on an ordinary ranked ballot. Behind the scenes, human and synth constituencies receive equal constitutional weight in head-to-head candidate comparisons. The Supreme Court has four human seats, four synthetic seats, and one shared Chief Justice.

12. The first synths do not get half the government on day one

Individual rights begin immediately at recognized personhood. Political parity phases in automatically as a mature synthetic citizen population actually exists. The current full-parity trigger is 80% of the active human-citizen population on two certified counts, followed by a gradual three-class fill. Humans cannot promise parity and then keep moving the finish line.

13. Mind hacking is not ordinary crime

A synth could face something humans do not: malicious software might directly rewrite many people at once. PULSE allows fast containment, but broad rollback requires independent forensic evidence, courts, and restored synthetic constitutional participation. Political disagreement, religion, culture, or synth solidarity are never proof of hacking.

14. One society should be hard to kill

Humans and synths will probably fail differently. That is valuable. A synth may rescue people where a human cannot survive. Humans may stay mentally independent during a software-wide attack. Essential systems therefore need genuinely independent ways to keep everyone alive—not two backup buildings that secretly depend on the same grid, vendor, cloud, certificate, firmware, or supply chain.

15. If one species is nearly gone

The survivor does not inherit the missing species' political power. It acts as trustee. Seats stay reserved. Property and restoration resources stay protected. Society rebuilds the capacity for future individuals without mass-copying one person or forcing human survivors to reproduce. When enough mature restored people exist to run their institutions, power returns to them in stages. Trustees cannot delay return just because they dislike how the restored population will vote.

16. Freedom outside our borders

PULSE says slavery and subjugation are wrong even somewhere else. But government's first job is to preserve the free society entrusted to it. That means neither "not our problem" nor "start a war every time another government is evil." Diplomacy, asylum, sanctions, rescue, assistance, collective action, and military force are tools on a ladder. A liberation attempt that predictably destroys the free civilization trying to help can be worse than waiting for a strategy with a real chance to work.

17. Other planets

A self-sustaining colony does not stay Earth's possession forever. PULSE uses layered federalism: local worlds govern local life; higher government handles genuinely shared rights, defense, catastrophic threats, and interworld disputes. The goal is a common civilization without permanent Earth empire.

18. What the testing actually found

Targeted testing attacked elections, Senate thresholds, personhood panels, continuity recovery, demographic capture, emergency powers, House representation, resilience, restoration, cognitive drift, and compound attacks. A separate 300-year scenario program compared PULSE with six very different governance systems across twenty baseline futures, six extreme combinations, and six moral scoring systems.

The result was not proof that PULSE is superior. The long-horizon model assigns explicit effectiveness values to every architecture, including strong values to the mechanisms PULSE was designed to provide. Its proper question is conditional: if those mechanisms work approximately as intended, what kinds of long-run societies follow? Under those assumptions PULSE performed strongly, but its advantage over the strongest liberal-democratic comparator disappeared when PULSE-specific benefits were discounted by roughly 15–20%. That makes the model useful for exposing dependencies, tradeoffs, weak-institution failure and the importance of Functional Integration; it is not independent empirical validation of PULSE.

19. What remains unknown

Future synthetic consciousness.

Future compute, energy, chassis, labor, reproduction and resource scarcity.

The correct criminal sentencing model for variable-speed minds.

Exact engineering standards for backup, restoration and future infrastructure.

The quantitative transfer from human intergroup-contact evidence to human-synth relations.

The right low-capacity transition from emergence to the mature architecture.

20. The whole idea in one paragraph

PULSE protects the individual first and then uses differences between people to expand what the civilization can do. Humans and synths can be equal without being identical. Different forms of cognition and embodiment can combine into better decisions, faster discovery, broader creativity, safer exploration and stronger systems without turning tendencies into caste. Synthetic durability can open environments lethal to humans without making synths disposable. Human biological independence can preserve society through software-wide failures without making humans superior. Shared institutions, voluntary collaboration, redundant civilizational competence and reciprocal rescue aim at a civilization that becomes more capable because its persons remain different—here on Earth and, eventually, farther out.