

# Metamind Research Backlog

Austrian economics · Slavoj Žižek · Knowledge, action, and power

22 October 2026 · Working research agenda · All items: Open, source-seeded

## Start with the tension

Use these traditions to challenge the framework, not decorate it. Hayek foregrounds dispersed, situated knowledge; Žižek's critique asks how ideology persists through practice despite conscious skepticism.<sup>1, 2</sup>

The proposed question is: can Metapraxis make useful work transferable without pretending to total knowledge, and can Brain Flywheel change practice rather than merely make participation look productive?

## Prioritized queue

| ID | Priority | Research question                                   |
|----|----------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| A1 | P0       | What knowledge should remain local?                 |
| A2 | P1       | Valuable to whom, for which purpose?                |
| A3 | P0       | Where do axioms end and testing begin?              |
| A4 | P1       | Can linking enable genuine discovery?               |
| Z1 | P0       | Can awareness coexist with harmful practice?        |
| Z2 | P1       | Who becomes the authority supposed to know?         |
| Z3 | P1       | Are we delegating work or the feeling of learning?  |
| Z4 | P2       | What must a knowledge brain never claim to capture? |
| X1 | P0       | Will people give, request, and reuse a module?      |
| X2 | P0       | Who governs the exchange and captures value?        |
| X3 | P1       | Can incompatible frameworks coexist usefully?       |
| X4 | P1       | What would count as a completed turn?               |

## Order of work

Begin with A1 → Z1 → A3, then X1 → X2. P0 resolves foundational assumptions; P1 develops mechanisms; P2 deepens the philosophical boundary. These are priorities, not calendar commitments.

1. Hayek  
[https://german.yale.edu/sites/default/files/hayek\\_-\\_the\\_use\\_of\\_knowledge\\_in\\_society.pdf](https://german.yale.edu/sites/default/files/hayek_-_the_use_of_knowledge_in_society.pdf)  
2. Matthew Sharpe, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy  
<https://iep.utm.edu/zizek/>

# Austrian economics: knowledge and value

## A1 · P0 · What knowledge should remain local?

**Reading anchor:** Hayek, “The Use of Knowledge in Society” (1945). Relevant knowledge is dispersed and includes particular circumstances of time and place; prices communicate changes without transferring every underlying detail.<sup>1</sup>

**Question:** Should a knowledge brain contain the method itself, a limited signal about it, or a route to the person who can apply it?

**Proposed work:** Take one real workflow and classify each component as codifiable, context-dependent, time-sensitive, or requiring live judgment. Compare a full archive, a compact module, and a consultation-based exchange.

**Output and completion:** A “keep local / share / ask the contributor” map, with three cases where exporting the content would lose important context. Record what this changes in the module schema.

**Boundary:** Hayek's economic argument does not establish that any particular knowledge platform must be centralized or decentralized. Treat architecture as a comparative design question.

## A2 · P1 · Valuable to whom?

**Reading anchor:** Menger, Principles of Economics, Chapter III. Value is not inherent in a good; higher-order goods derive value from the prospective goods they help produce, with complementarity mattering to production.<sup>3</sup>

**Question:** Could the same artifact be valuable to one recipient and useless to another, without its factual quality changing?

**Proposed work:** Ask different prospective users to rank one module for learning, execution, and collaboration. Record missing complementary resources, expected benefits, curation costs, and actual reuse separately.

**Output and completion:** A value-in-context rubric tested against three contrasting use cases. It must keep usefulness, evidence quality, willingness to pay, and permission to use as separate fields.

**Boundary:** Subjective valuation does not mean truth is subjective, price proves quality, or every contribution should be monetized. A scarce expert's time and a copyable file also present different constraints.

---

1. Hayek  
[https://german.yale.edu/sites/default/files/hayek\\_-\\_the\\_use\\_of\\_knowledge\\_in\\_society.pdf](https://german.yale.edu/sites/default/files/hayek_-_the_use_of_knowledge_in_society.pdf)

3. Menger  
[https://cdn.mises.org/Principles%20of%20Economics\\_5.pdf](https://cdn.mises.org/Principles%20of%20Economics_5.pdf)

# Austrian economics: action and discovery

## A3 · P0 · Axioms versus evidence

**Reading anchor:** Mises, Human Action, Chapter II, “Praxeology and History.” Mises presents praxeology as formal, a priori knowledge of human action, distinct from historical experience and not empirically falsifiable in his account.<sup>4</sup>

**Question:** Which Metapraxis statements are definitions or conditional deductions, and which are empirical claims about how people actually work?

**Proposed work:** Classify ten claims from the framework as definition, assumption, formal consequence, empirical hypothesis, heuristic, or normative commitment. For example, “users will share more with attribution” belongs in the empirical category, not among axioms.

**Output and completion:** An epistemic-status schema with an appropriate challenge procedure for each type. At least one initially “obvious” claim must be recategorized or narrowed.

**Boundary:** Metapraxis is not a renaming of Mises's praxeology. Testable workflow claims remain testable; shared interest in action and logic does not resolve methodological disagreement.

## A4 · P1 · Discovery beyond search

**Reading anchor:** Kirzner, “Entrepreneurial Discovery and the Competitive Market Process” (1997). He distinguishes deliberate search for known gaps from noticing previously unsuspected opportunities, while allowing entrepreneurial error and denying guaranteed convergence to equilibrium.<sup>5</sup>

**Question:** Can linking brains reveal a useful possibility that neither participant was explicitly searching for?

**Proposed work:** Compare task-directed retrieval with cross-domain pairings. Require a concrete proposed use, then test one candidate instead of counting surprising associations.

**Output and completion:** A discovery log separating retrieval, adaptation, novel combination, and failed analogy. Retain at least one negative case and the conditions that defeated it.

**Boundary:** Surprise is not usefulness, and a useful recombination is not evidence that market processes or the flywheel always self-correct.

---

4. Mises

<https://mises.org/online-book/human-action/chapter-ii-epistemological-problems-sciences-human-action/1-praxeology-and-history>

5. Kirzner

<https://walkerd.people.charleston.edu/400/Sobel/1B-3.%20Kirzner%20-%20Entrepreneurial%20Discovery%20and%20the%20Competitive%20Market%20Process%20An%20Austrian%20Approach.pdf>

# Žižek: ideology and authority

## Z1 · P0 · Knowing better, doing otherwise

**Reading anchor:** The Sublime Object of Ideology (1989), beginning with Sharpe's account of ideological cynicism. Drawing on Sloterdijk, Žižek argues that conscious distance from an ideology can coexist with practices that sustain it.<sup>2</sup>

**Question:** Could participants know that a platform is extractive or superficial, yet keep feeding it because recognition, convenience, or obligation makes withdrawal costly?

**Proposed work:** Audit a proposed “give brain” flow for stated ideals versus rewarded actions. Inspect whether ranking, streaks, monetization, or visibility would reward uploads rather than useful contributions.

**Output and completion:** An ideology-and-incentives audit containing three possible contradictions and one observable redesign test. Distinguish what the interface says from what its rewards encourage.

**Boundary:** This is a proposed application of the critique, not a clinical diagnosis of users. Better information alone should not be assumed to change behavior.

## Z2 · P1 · The authority supposed to know

**Reading anchor:** Sharpe's discussion of Žižek's “big Other” and political authority explains how symbolic positions and beliefs sustain authority beyond an individual officeholder.<sup>2</sup>

**Question:** Would an elegant graph, expert badge, or confident agent become an authority that participants presume has verified everything?

**Proposed work:** Design three presentations of the same disputed module: polished certainty, visible evidence, and explicit disagreement. Ask users what they believe has actually been checked and who they think is responsible.

**Output and completion:** An authority-boundary specification covering sources, reviewer identity, scope, dissent, appeals, and correction notices. A reader should be able to identify who knows what and what remains unresolved.

**Boundary:** The “big Other” is not simply another name for a database or AI system. The mapping is a research hypothesis about how authority might be attributed.

---

2. Matthew Sharpe, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy  
<https://iep.utm.edu/zizek/>

# Žižek: delegation and the limits of capture

## Z3 · P1 · Delegating the feeling of learning

**Reading anchor:** Pfaller's "Interpassivity and Misdemeanors," in dialogue with Žižek, examines delegated consumption, observation, and belief, including canned laughter. It is not a general claim that all task delegation is harmful.<sup>6</sup>

**Question:** Might collecting an impressive knowledge brain create the feeling that learning has happened even when nothing has been understood or applied?

**Proposed work:** Contrast "save a module" with "apply a module and explain one limitation." Track the gap between perceived progress, demonstrated understanding, and successful reuse.

**Output and completion:** A participation measure that separates capture, reading, understanding, application, and contribution. At least one test must require evidence beyond a click or self-report.

**Boundary:** This is an analogy to interpassivity, not an established measurement of it. Delegation can be useful; the question is what responsibility or experience is being displaced.

## Z4 · P2 · A person is not a complete profile

**Reading anchor:** Sharpe presents Žižek's subject as not self-transparent or fully self-mastering. The Parallax View is a further reading assignment, not a completed basis for a new "universal mesh" claim.<sup>2, 7</sup>

**Question:** What would be lost if a knowledge brain were marketed as a complete representation of its contributor?

**Proposed work:** List forms of omission, contradiction, change, privacy, and embodied judgment that the module cannot responsibly claim to capture. Compare "this is my brain" with "this is a bounded contribution from my practice."

**Output and completion:** A non-capture charter covering identity claims, private material, change over time, consent, and the right not to explain everything.

**Boundary:** Philosophical incompleteness is not the same as missing database fields. The design should avoid turning either a person or a philosophical subject into an exhaustive schema.

---

6. Robert Pfaller  
<https://zizekstudies.org/index.php/IJZS/article/viewFile/20/18>

2. Matthew Sharpe, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy  
<https://iep.utm.edu/zizek/>

7. MIT Press, The Parallax View  
<https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262512688/the-parallax-view/>

# Synthesis: participation and governance

## X1 · P0 · Test the exchange, not the slogan

**Dependency:** A1 and Z1 first; A2 can refine the interpretation. Hayek's emphasis on local cooperation and Žižek's attention to enacted belief motivate different questions about participation, not a unified doctrine.<sup>1, 2</sup>

**Question:** Will people voluntarily offer, request, and reuse a bounded method when the effort and terms are visible?

**Proposed work:** Run one real request with two willing contributors. Record what each will share, withhold, or explain live; agree on rights and expected returns; test one application.

**Output and completion:** An exchange record plus both participants' reasons to repeat or decline. Require a useful output or an honestly documented failure, not merely a completed upload.

**Boundary:** A small pilot is exploratory evidence. Do not generalize willingness, trust, or economic value to a whole market.

## X2 · P0 · Governance without a false binary

**Reading anchor:** Ostrom's Nobel lecture examines polycentric arrangements and rejects one-size-fits-all institutional solutions. It distinguishes common-pool resources from public goods, including knowledge, rather than treating every shared resource as identical.<sup>8</sup>

**Question:** How could contribution remain voluntary while preventing platform capture, fabricated authority, and unresolved disputes?

**Proposed work:** Compare a central host, portable local modules, and a small contributor-governed exchange. Stress-test withdrawal, commercial reuse, moderation, correction, and a dominant contributor.

**Output and completion:** A governance matrix identifying who can decide, appeal, export, earn, and exit. Document at least one serious failure mode for every arrangement.

**Boundary:** Ostrom is a deliberate external counterpoint, not a proxy for Austrian economics or Žižek. Copyable knowledge, scarce expert time, and limited review capacity require separate analysis.

---

1. Hayek

[https://german.yale.edu/sites/default/files/hayek\\_-\\_the\\_use\\_of\\_knowledge\\_in\\_society.pdf](https://german.yale.edu/sites/default/files/hayek_-_the_use_of_knowledge_in_society.pdf)

2. Matthew Sharpe, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

<https://iep.utm.edu/zizek/>

8. Elinor Ostrom

[https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2018/06/ostrom\\_lecture.pdf](https://www.nobelprize.org/uploads/2018/06/ostrom_lecture.pdf)

## Synthesis: disagreement and a real return loop

### X3 · P1 · Preserve incompatible frameworks

**Dependency:** A3 and Z2; Z4 adds a deeper philosophical critique. Start with the methodological difference between Mises's apriorism and Metamind's proposed testing of practical applications, rather than claiming they agree.<sup>4</sup>

**Question:** Can Metapraxis link two frameworks without silently translating away their disagreement?

**Proposed work:** Compare two explanations of one stalled exchange. Record each account's primitives, assumptions, causal claims, normative commitments, and evidence standards before proposing a mapping.

**Output and completion:** A contradiction register with relations such as “compatible for this task,” “analogy only,” and “incompatible premises.” Retain one disagreement rather than manufacturing a consensus.

**Boundary:** A common metadata schema does not create a common ontology or make conflicting claims simultaneously true.

### X4 · P1 · Demonstrate a completed turn

**Dependency:** X1 and the existing operating playbook. This is a proposed design experiment, not a test of whether an entire philosophical school is correct.

**Question:** Does a second participant begin from a better position because the first exchange returned something useful?

**Proposed work:** Compare ordinary source files with a curated module plus transfer record for the same bounded task. Use comparable instructions and record familiarity, curation effort, quality, reuse time, and uncertainty.

**Output and completion:** A before/after evidence note and revised module. Success requires a useful, inspectable improvement or a preserved limitation that changes the next attempt; file count is not sufficient.

**Boundary:** Include maintenance costs and alternative explanations. A negative result can justify simplifying the grammar or parking the use case.

## Research discipline

For each item, preserve a source summary, an objection, a design consequence, and a decision: continue, revise, test, or park. Change status only when the stated output exists; keep scholarship, interpretation, and measured behavior distinct.

---

4. Mises

<https://mises.org/online-book/human-action/chapter-ii-epistemological-problems-sciences-human-action/1-praxeology-and-history>