

Q2 Update for Board

Information for the Q2 2025 board meeting

Contents

Our Q2 update for the board covers the most important developments at Leverage during the present quarter (Q2, 2025), from Monday, March 31st, 2025, through Friday, June 27th, 2025. This update is intended for the board to review prior to the Q2 2025 board meeting on Monday, June 30th.

The update covers:

- (1) [Resources](#)
- (2) [Activities](#)
- (3) [Compliance](#)

The most recent board update is available here: [Q1 2025 Board Update](#).

Resources

The Leverage team enjoyed a busy second quarter, adapting and revising our partnership offerings for QBI, hiring two new contractors to assist with projects, and catching up on priorities. Geoff has spent time managing the partnership and assisting with fundraising, Melinda continues to support QBI on legal and operational matters, and Oliver has been leading Leverage's own quantum biology research to complement the work being done by QBI.

This quarter, the institute received a small, unexpected, but always welcome donation from a supporter, but continues to be funded mainly from our QBI partnership disbursements. Geoff continues to donate his time instead of a salary, and our part-time researcher, Dan Graham, took a few weeks off this quarter to focus on his teaching job during finals; both have contributed to extending the runway for the organization.

For Q2, the numbers were:

- Account balance on April 1: \$14,700.84
- Funds received from April through June 27: **\$83,381.87**
- Amount spent April through June 27: **\$67,714.40**
- Account balance on June 27, 2025: \$30,368.31

Being a fully remote organization, staffing remains our highest expense, with staff retreats following. The team finds the retreats refreshing and motivating, and we make excellent use of

the time by focusing on our goals, courses of action, and any areas of discord. We also generally just have a great time seeing each other, and the retreats help reinforce a strong sense of rapport and camaraderie.

In April, the team met in New Orleans, LA, for 3 days to set the focus for the quarter. We had a great time enjoying everything NOLA had to offer, and even went on a cemetery tour where we photographed an actual ghost! We had budgeted \$5,300 for this trip, but thanks to early planning, reasonable rates, and large food portions, we spent just over \$4,000 in total.

For the Q3 retreat, the team is traveling to Boston to consider our priorities and meet the LENR (low-energy nuclear reactions) team at their lab at MIT. Visiting the original QuBiT lab was very helpful for our understanding of quantum biology and our ability to provide value to the QBI team. We expect the same to be true for nucleonics / LENR.

Assuming the QBI partnership remains unchanged, Geoff continues working pro bono, and the team remains on budget, all of Leverage's financial obligations are covered through the end of the year, minus our Q4 retreat (approx \$5,000). As always, we continue to monitor costs and reduce expenses where we can, but are happy that our business model seems to be stably supporting the organization.

Activities

Leverage's activities break down into (1) Leadership, (2) Partnerships, (3) Programs, and (4) Other. "Leadership" covers the institute as a whole. "Partnerships" covers existing and prospective partnerships. "Programs," naturally, covers institute programs. "Other" includes all other institute activities, including initiatives.

Leadership

Leverage's leadership team, which is composed of Geoff Anders (CEO), Oliver Careful (CCO), and Melinda Bradley (COO), meets weekly to discuss what is happening at the institute and make important decisions. The meeting also produces a useful record of the institute's history on a week-by-week basis.

1. We are prioritizing partnerships over programs.

Over the last quarter, the team has prioritized work on its current partnership with QBI and prospective partnership with the nucleonics/LENR team. This has been a result of the apparent success of the partnership model, which has provided both funding and an immediately visible avenue of impact for the organization.

Partnership Intake Guide

How we choose projects

- 1. Safety Awareness**


Scientific advances have the potential to change the world in good ways and bad. While it can be difficult to determine the consequences of advances with precision or high probability, it is important to try to forecast outcomes, both for the sake of mitigating risks and heading off potentially undesirable results.
- 2. Economic Strategy**


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- 3. Transparent Demonstrations**


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- 4. Fitting Aesthetic**


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- 5. Experimental Approach**


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Leverage is developing a partnership intake guide

The cost of prioritizing partnerships has been less emphasis on internal programs. Under Metascience, both a philosophy of science piece and the publication of the Gray study have been delayed. For Social Science, an introspection piece is still at the draft stage. One could consider partnership activities to fall under the Bottlenecks program, and, technically speaking, they do. But it does not feel that way.

2. We've learned to expand the team using contractors.

During Q2, Leverage expanded its team by adding two contractors. The first was Anna Stillwell, who was hired to help with non-profit fundraising for QBI. The second was Cliff Sandlin, a molecular biologist who is helping Leverage investigate the causal mechanism behind weak magnetic field effects in biology. The Anna engagement was successful and wrapped up in mid-June. The Cliff contract is also going really well, and the team has decided to extend the contract.

The use of contractors is a change for Leverage. Since August 2023, the Leverage team has been Geoff, Oliver, and Melinda full-time, with Dan Graham working on history of science part-time. Occasionally, there has been discussion of adding new team

members, but not contractors. So far, it seems that using contractors is a great way to add capacity while minimizing the cultural challenges of expanding the organization.

3. We're about to take our twelfth quarterly retreat.

The team is now looking forward to its Q3 retreat, which will take place in Boston in the first week of July. Retreats have become a successful part of Leverage culture. We have learned how to do them easily and well, with retreats now being easy to plan and typically coming in under budget. They're fun, team morale gets a boost, and different locations are both personally memorable and make it easier to remember relevant organizational facts. The team also gets to scout another location as part of the search for an eventual permanent physical location.



The Q2 2025 retreat to New Orleans

For the Q3 retreat, the team will try something new. There will be a retreat in a new city, as usual, but this time, the retreat will serve as an opportunity to meet with the LENR team. Details are still being worked out, but we're hoping to have two days to learn about the team and field, as well as to share some of Leverage's learnings on the topic of bottlenecks in science and technology.

Partnerships

Leverage develops partnerships with leading scientific teams in order to support their efforts breaking bottlenecks in science and technology. The institute's first partnership has been with the Quantum Biology Institute (QBI). The next prospective partnership is with the LENR team from MIT, focusing on nucleonics. There are a variety of other potential partnerships on the horizon as well, such as the one discussed previously with the Wolfram Institute.

Color-coding below is as follows:

- **Quantum Biology Institute (QBI)**
- **LENR / Nucleonics team**

4. QBI has now been set up to succeed on its own.

The primary goal of this quarter has been to set QBI up to be self-reliant. This has meant hiring the rest of the team, continuing to provide key training to staff, and setting the organization up to raise funds for itself in the future, and dealing with the various challenges that arise along the way. As far as we can tell, this has been successful. QBI has a functional lab and is ready to build!



There have, of course, been many challenges along the way. Organizing the team, determining roles, tracking spending, planning the microscope, and actually building have all presented their unique obstacles. Now, however, with Anna Stillwell coming on board as Executive Director, it seems QBI will be in good hands for the foreseeable future, and the Leverage contract means that Anna will have all of Leverage's talent and resources available to help make QBI succeed.

5. The QBI team is now building the microscope.

Several factors have now fallen into place. The optical table arrived. Ale began more detailed planning and started placing pieces of the microscope on the optical table. In parallel, Brian Ross, the new Head of Biochemistry, has relocated and begun work at the LA lab, growing specially engineered proteins that fluoresce much more than usual in response to magnetic fields. Lab setup has been achieved; scientific discussions are happening. So it's safe to say, QBI is up and running.



Caption about Brian Ross

Leverage's primary contribution to the above in Q2 was getting out of the way. As we've learned, groups have their own motivation and degree of social cohesion, and being present at the wrong times can confuse people on the topic of what is happening, who is in charge, and so forth. This means that knowing when to intervene and when to step back and let things happen is key to helping a new group come together.

6. Melinda continues to train Jen in operations.

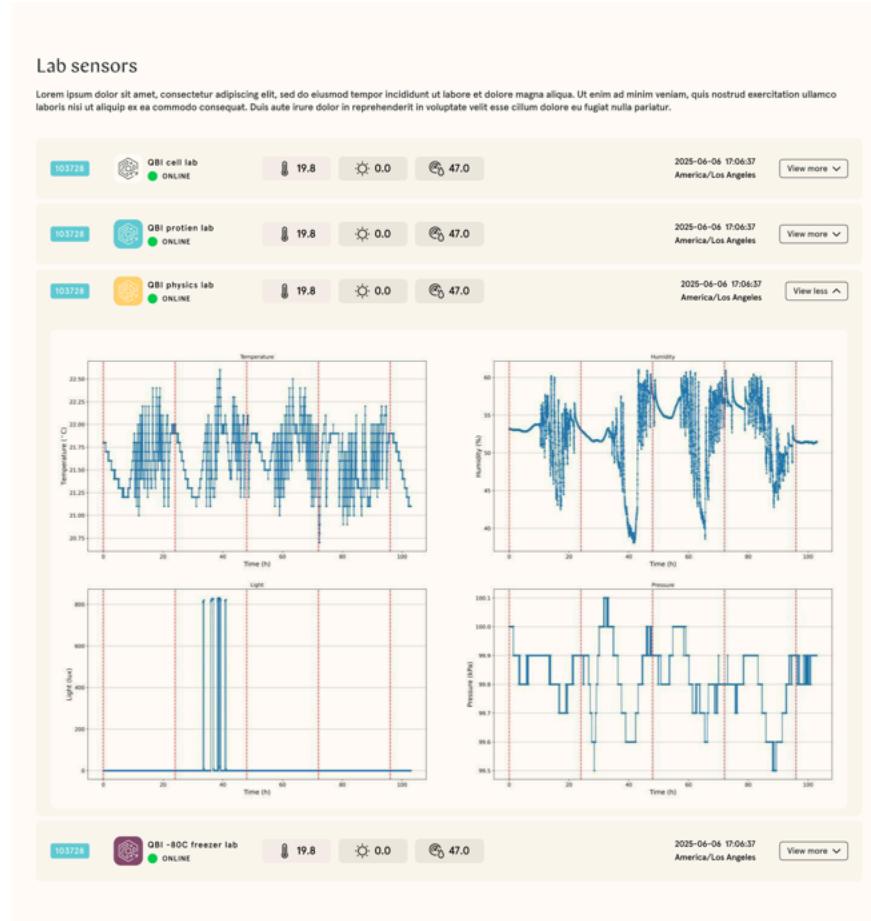
That's not to say that Leverage hasn't been hard at work. One important contribution during the quarter has been Melinda continuing to train Jen in operations while supplying needed assistance. Topics and activities covered include: research and guidance on employee status, including Hungarian tax law and foreign and domestic contractor information; getting QBI a CA state income tax exemption; legal compliance, including registering QBI in MD and posting labor law posters; human resources, including creating a plan for HR; and finances, including monitoring, payroll, donor receipts, and more.

Melinda and Oliver teamed up, in particular, to help Jen create proposals for key policies, including on parental leave and relocation reimbursement. These policies ended up being important for helping QBI get some of its hiring actions across the finish line.

7. Oliver is overseeing a QBI website refresh.

As part of his duties as acting CEO at QBI, Geoff asked the Leverage team to take over redesigning the QBI website. While the design is great and the website worked for the 2024 fundraise, the project is actually running now and so a lot more information, and different information, is needed. Geoff and Oliver mocked up a new version of the

website in Excalidraw and then brought in Si McClellan, whose team had created the original QBI website. The website is now about halfway towards being redone.



Oliver's concept to plot live feeds from the lab

The website project is a perfect example of one of the ways Leverage is able to help its partners. Geoff (as acting CEO of QBI) had identified the need, but was already in the process of winding down his role and scouting a replacement. So he (as acting CEO of QBI) was able to pass the project off to Leverage, which was able to execute on it extremely quickly and with high-quality output. Of course, Si's team is a crucial component, since they're extremely talented as well and have worked with Leverage before.

8. Geoff is overseeing QBI fundraising.

Geoff (as acting CEO of QBI) has been in charge of fundraising. For speed and efficiency, he passed this task to Leverage, which hired Anna Stillwell as a contractor. Anna has a great background in non-profit fundraising, having previously worked for the Wikimedia Foundation and having landed a particularly large private gift. Geoff (in his Leverage role) then oversaw Anna's work, which was, in his opinion, fantastic.

It may seem unnecessarily complex or convoluted to pass a task from one organization to another or to play multiple roles across multiple organizations. Indeed, now that Geoff has left his role as acting CEO at QBI, things will be simpler. But the complexity was merely formal; in reality, this arrangement made it possible to hire a highly skilled collaborator very quickly, without having to interact with QBI's own processes, which would, at the time, have introduced a several-week delay.

As a postscript, Anna has now wrapped up her contract with Leverage and has been hired as Executive Director at QBI. Her time on the Leverage contract gave her plenty of time to learn about the organization and the team, and there turned out to be a great fit!

9. The Leverage team has given weekly presentations to QBI.

The main activity, however, that Leverage engaged in with QBI over the quarter was weekly presentations on topics of special relevance to QBI, tailored to the team's existing level of knowledge. We did ten presentations in total: (1) internal communications, (2) team motivation, (3) negotiation, (4) company values, (5) assessing performance, (6) respecting diversity, (7) prioritization, (8) planning, (9) planning (again), and (10) organizational memory.

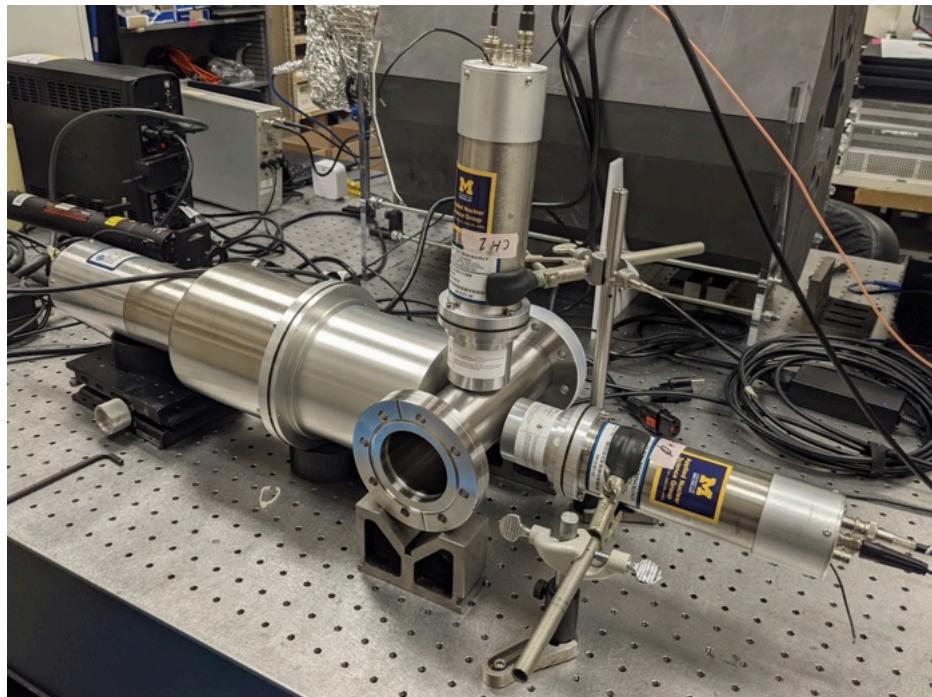


Each presentation was one hour long, 4-5 slides total

The presentations were received well, especially the ones on internal communication, negotiation, and planning. We hit a snag in the presentation on prioritization, having tried unsuccessfully to import some external material (Eisenhower matrices) without completing our own thoughts on the topic. The rest was material we were very familiar with — the challenge with each presentation was figuring out how to communicate all of the content effectively in a single-hour slot.

10. Our next prospective partner is the MIT LENR team.

The Leverage intake process for new partners has three steps: (1) initial exploration, (2) fundraising, and (3) partnership. During the initial exploration, we look at the science and the team to decide whether the science is solid and the team is ready. We've done that now with the field of nucleonics / low-energy nuclear reactions (LENR). The field is extremely interesting, there's a very plausible case to be made for it, and the team looks great. So we're moving on to the next part: fundraising.



The MIT LENR team has a fully operational lab

In fact, about half of the team's upcoming retreat will be devoted to spending time with the LENR team, learning more about nucleonics, and discussing what the fundraising strategy will be. It's clear there's a bottleneck in the field: progress has been slow, but there's a lot (we estimate) of (hidden) energy. The question is how to tap into it, which is what we're trying to figure out.

Programs

Leverage's three programs are:

- **Metascience**
- **Social Science**
- **Bottlenecks**

Metascience contains History of Science and Philosophy of Science. **Social Science** contains **Introspection**, Coordination Studies, and Sociology. **Bottlenecks** contains our partnerships as well as our general work on the topic of bottlenecks in science and technology.

11. The team has been communicating organizational knowledge.

One continued focus apart from partnerships has been the Leverage Weekly publication. Each Leverage Weekly discusses some topic in organizational design and summarizes the institute's work that week, typically choosing the topic to dovetail in some way with the theme of the work for the week. Leverage Weeklies during Q2 covered giving an organization [time to think](#), defining an organization's [productive baseline](#), and many other subjects.



Though this was not originally intended, the Leverage Weeklies are currently Leverage's largest effort to communicate the results of its previous research. The brief pieces combine knowledge from experience and study, including the study of individuals and groups. Together, they present a coherent overall philosophy and practical advice for running an organization. The information is especially suited to non-profits, but applies to for-profit entities as well.

12. Geoff and Oliver are working on papers on magnetobiology.

We are now writing our own papers in quantum biology and the related field of magnetobiology. There was a question about whether we could do this and it appears the answer is yes. There are at least four papers currently planned, covering topics like the avian compass, the radical pair mechanism, mechanisms for weak magnetic field effects, and more.

Rethinking the avian compass

Abstract

The poster children of quantum biology for many decades has been birds, in particular, the European robin. Birds have held this place of honor because of their famed ability to navigate using the Earth's magnetic field as part of migration. The Earth's magnetic field is weak (~50mT), suggesting to different a quantum mechanism for avian magnetoreception. The empirical support for the claim that birds of many species respond to weak magnetic fields is strong; the presumption, therefore, is that avian magnetoreception is real and has a quantum basis. However, evidence that birds actually navigate using a magnetically actuated compass,^[9] especially a declination compass, is surprisingly thin. Reasons for doubt arise from a careful study of existing literature, a visual examination of birds' flight paths, and an understanding of relevant quantum mechanisms. Well-designed studies on the relation between magnetoreception^[1] and navigation in other animals, such as butterflies, are suggested. If such experiments, which are cheap, yield a negative result, the original avian compass hypothesis should be reexamined.^[9]

Introduction

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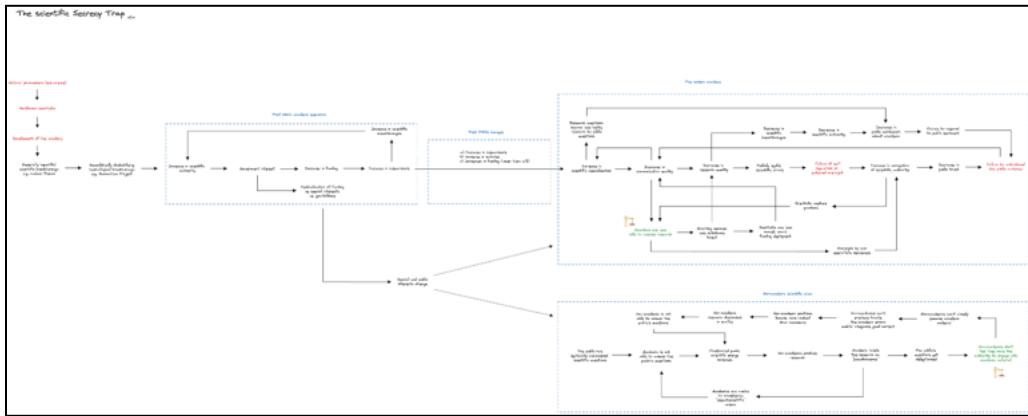
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Oliver's draft aesthetic for Leverage's forthcoming papers

Leverage's ability to investigate and write papers on quantum biology and magnetobiology has been substantially augmented by the efforts of Cliff Sandlin, an independent researcher who began contracting for Leverage in May. Cliff specializes in biochemistry but is also a generalist, with an interest in scientific methodology and quantum physics. He has been conducting a critical literature review, breaking down causal mechanisms, and generating novel hypotheses, focusing especially on the question of the mechanism for weak magnetic field effects in biology.

13. We've continued investigating scientific dysfunction.

Last quarter, we reported that the economics of scientific instruments are distorting science. It is now clear that the distortions and dysfunctions within the scientific enterprise are notably larger than that. This is something that we had long surmised, but it is becoming possible to tell a story, complete with concrete illustrations, of how the scientific enterprise declined over almost the last hundred years. The story we have so far combines technical, institutional, and social factors.



Diagramming has been helpful in understanding scientific dysfunction

Geoff and Oliver have worked together on the analysis, essentially employing a divide and conquer strategy. Oliver has looked into the economic elements, first of instruments, then scientific funding, and built a model that outputs a decline in scientific standards. Geoff has focused on the history, including World War II and important scientific developments beforehand, as well as theoretical models of bottlenecks.

14. The institute published a new introspection video.

The dissemination of our introspective research inched forward this quarter. Melinda edited the recording of an online talk Geoff gave in January entitled “Ten metaphors for understanding the mind”; the published [video](#) is now available on Leverage’s YouTube channel. This video is, in some ways, the most accessible introduction yet to the view of the mind Leverage developed between 2012-2019.



Screenshot from the online presentation

Periodically releasing videos has given us an opportunity to work on increasing production quality, which Melinda has been doing over time. In addition to being accessible, the video linked here is also the highest production quality introspection video the institute has produced thus far.

15. The Gray study is delayed.

Despite our attempts to buttress our history of science research, things are still behind schedule. Dan had to take time off to focus on his academic commitments, and Geoff and Oliver, despite early plans to work on the history of science, ended up focusing almost entirely on quantum biology.

Nevertheless, progress has been made. New interesting insights have been reached about the relation between the social acceptance and institutional reception of Gray's discovery of electrical repulsion, and revisions have brought the study into accord with our earlier case study on William Gilbert. Completion is now scheduled for July, at which point we may switch some things up.

Other

16. Work on other activities continues to be deprioritized.

Leverage has two initiatives, the AI and Fiscal Sponsorship initiatives, and at least one project, the Archive project. As with many things, however, these have been deprioritized for now, with most of the institute's focus on partnerships and related research, as described above. One of the topics of the Q3 retreat will be whether anything should be done with these deprioritized items.

Despite the focus on partnerships, some work on the AI initiative continues. Getting a good assessment of the likely impacts of current and prospective AI technologies is still important, even though, in the institute's judgment, it is not as pressing as other matters. As always, some time will be spent keeping track of the situation, and the team continues to have the ability to change priorities if there arises reason to do so.

Compliance

During Q2, 2025, Leverage didn't have any legal or compliance issues of note.

As we remain committed to our focus on legality and compliance, we have shifted from a task-list approach to a continuous monitoring mindset, which we feel is essential for an effective, professional, and trustworthy non-profit. We will continue to stay updated on regulations, identify

areas of risk, and conduct internal and external audits to validate ongoing compliance and identify areas for improvement.

