

Here are a bunch of directions you can take that feel “Fediverse-native” (user-controlled, transparent, not just engagement-maximizing), plus some wording for what a curated experience could *feel like*.

What I’d want a curated Fediverse timeline to feel like

A curated Fediverse timeline shouldn’t feel like it’s trying to addict me or push “hot takes.” It should feel like:

- **I never miss the people I care about**, even if I’m offline for a day.
- **Conversations have context** (threads stay together; I see the “why” before the dunk).
- **Discovery is intentional**, not random virality: I find posts aligned with my interests and communities, not just whatever got boosted.
- **It respects my boundaries**: content warnings, muted topics, blocked domains, and “don’t show me this vibe” all actually work.
- **It’s explainable**: I can tap “Why am I seeing this?” and it gives a simple reason.
- **It’s adjustable**: I can choose “calm / focused / catch-up / explore,” and it changes what I see.

In short: *“Help me feel connected and informed, without turning the Fediverse into a rage machine.”*

Don’t default to Like count (it’s the easiest, but not the best)

Likes/favourites are useful, but if you lean on them heavily you’ll recreate the same failure modes as big social platforms: meme dominance, outrage bait, “main character” dynamics, and homogeneity.

Instead, treat likes as **one small signal** inside a more human set of signals.

Signals that work better (or at least safer) than raw likes

1) Relationship strength (“people I actually follow for a reason”)

Rank higher when:

- I reply to them, they reply to me (mutual conversation)
- I click/expand their posts often
- I read their threads to the end
- I frequently view their profile
- We share mutuals (lightweight collaborative filtering)

This makes the timeline feel like *my network*, not “the network.”

2) “Conversation value” over “reaction count”

Boost posts that have:

- **Meaningful replies** (longer replies, back-and-forth, more distinct participants)
- **Thread coherence** (a thread that reads like a story, not a pile-on)
- **Low repetition** (not the 50th post on the same dunk)

This is basically: *optimize for “good discussions I’d regret missing.”*

3) Interest matching (topics/hashtags/language)

Rank higher if:

- It matches my saved interests (hashtags, keywords, communities)
- It matches my language preferences
- It comes from accounts I’ve tagged mentally as “good on this topic”

This can be done with simple NLP embeddings **locally** (privacy-friendly) or even just TF-IDF/keyword matching for an MVP.

4) Recency with “catch-up fairness”

Pure recency is great, but people miss stuff.

A good pattern is:

- **Fresh feed:** recent posts come first
- **Catch-up lane:** the best 10–30 things since my last session (so I don’t scroll forever)

5) Diversity constraints (prevents the “one topic/person dominates” issue)

Even if 10 posts score highest, don’t show all 10 if they’re:

- from the same account
- the same hashtag/topic
- the same domain/link
- the same “type” (all memes / all politics / all tech)

This single feature makes a curated feed feel *less algorithmic and more editorial*.

6) Originality and “signal-to-noise”

Rank higher when:

- It’s an original post vs. a boost of a boost
- It has enough substance (text length, link quality, attachments)
- It’s not repetitive (near-duplicate detection)

7) Safety / comfort (user-defined, not “platform-defined”)

You can incorporate:

- user mutes/blocks/CWs
- “low conflict” mode (downrank posts with lots of angry reply patterns)
- “no politics today” mode, etc.

Important: this should be **opt-in** and controllable, because different users want different norms.

A really good product pattern: “Modes” instead of one algorithm

People don’t have one goal. Give them a few *explicit* feed modes:

Catch Up

- Goal: see what mattered since last time
- Signals: relationship strength + conversation value + recency
- Output: small, finite list (like 25 posts)

Friends First

- Goal: feel connected
- Signals: relationship strength + original posts + replies
- Output: mostly people you follow, minimal “global trending”

Explore

- Goal: discover new accounts/ideas
- Signals: interest matching + diversity + “adjacent communities”
- Output: introduces new accounts slowly with “follow” nudges

Deep Focus

- Goal: avoid distractions
- Signals: downrank memes/viral, prefer longer posts, threads, saved topics
- Output: slower, quieter feed

This makes the experience feel **honest**: the user chooses the intention.

“Put into words” — a curated Fediverse experience statement you can use

Here are a few product copy options you can adapt:

Option A (calm + human):

“Your timeline, but easier to keep up with. See the posts and conversations you’re most likely to care about, with clear reasons and full control. No ragebait, no mystery, just a smarter way to catch up.”

Option B (Fediverse values):

“Curation without manipulation. This feed prioritizes people you interact with, topics you care about, and meaningful conversations—while respecting your mutes, your boundaries, and your choice to switch back to chronological anytime.”

Option C (editorial metaphor):

“Think of it like a personal editor: it bundles threads, avoids repeats, and highlights what mattered while you were away.”

A practical scoring model (simple, explainable)

You can implement curation as:

Step 1: Candidate pool

Take posts from:

- accounts you follow
- optionally: posts boosted by close mutuals
- optionally: posts from selected hashtags/lists

Step 2: Compute a score

Example (not “the” answer, just one workable formula):

Score =

- $0.35 * \text{relationship_strength}$
- $0.20 * \text{interest_match}$
- $0.15 * \text{conversation_quality}$
- $0.15 * \text{recency_decay}$
- $0.10 * \text{originality}$
- $0.05 * \text{user_feedback}$ (your “show less/show more” buttons)

Then apply **hard filters**:

- remove blocked/muted/CW preferences
- downrank spammy repetition
- enforce diversity: max N posts per author/topic per page

Step 3: Explanations

Store the top 2–3 contributing reasons so you can show:

- “Because you often reply to @name”

- “Because it matches #photography”
 - “Because this thread has active discussion”
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AI features beyond ranking that feel *amazing* on the Fediverse

If you want something that feels more “AI feature” than just sorting:

1) Thread bundling + “context card”

- Collapses a thread into one item
- Shows “main claim + key reply + link preview”
- Lets you expand into the full thread

2) Smart de-duplication

- Hides the 7th boost of the same post
- Shows “Boosted by 5 people you follow” as one item

3) Daily/weekly digest

- “Top 10 things from your network”
- “3 ongoing conversations you participated in”
- “New people you interacted with”

4) Personal topic channels (“mixes”)

- Like Spotify mixes, but for your timeline:
 - “Art & Design Mix”
 - “Local Berlin Mix”

- “Open Source Mix”
- Each channel has its own tuning and filters.

5) “Tempo control”

A slider:

- **Fresh** (recency)
- **Best** (quality/relationship)
- **Wide** (diversity/discovery)

It’s intuitive and gives users agency.

Key Fediverse-friendly principles (so users trust it)

If you ship this, trust will hinge on:

- **Opt-in** (chronological remains available)
 - **Explainability** (“why this post”)
 - **User control** (modes, sliders, per-topic toggles)
 - **Local-first when possible** (compute embeddings on-device; don’t centralize profiles)
 - **No dark patterns** (no infinite “for you” doom feed without a stop)
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If you want a strong MVP that feels good fast

A solid first version that avoids controversy:

1. **Catch-Up feed** (finite list since last visit)
2. **Relationship-first** (people you interact with)

3. **De-dup boosts**
4. **Thread bundling**
5. **Why am I seeing this?**
6. **Show more / Show less of this topic/account**

That will already feel like a *curated* Fediverse experience without needing heavy “AI magic.”

If you tell me what kind of Fediverse client you’re building (web/mobile, Mastodon-only vs broader ActivityPub, and whether you want local-only processing), I can propose:

- 2–3 concrete ranking recipes
- the exact user controls to expose
- and an MVP → v2 roadmap that won’t alienate chronological-feed purists.