About Curie

> ✉ I wrote a quick summary of all the things I'd want to know about the team and project myself if I was open and looking at different opportunities. I wrote it myself, so it's written from a 1st person. The goal of this is not to convince you to join, but get you interested enough to have a short call with me and learn more. I intentionally exaggerated some areas where I believe the filtering is binary, in hopes to disincentivize the candidates who are unlikely a fit.

About the product

- We're building a GitHub for research. Another way to think of it is Google scholar + StackExchange.

- Simply put we are building the best digital reading experience, as well as the best collaboration tool. It's a tool every scientist, every university student, and anyone who does deep research is waiting for.

- I think software copilots are very interesting, but science copilots will be the most fascinating machines we've ever built. A science agent will not only be a digital researcher capable of accelerating research workflows, and scientific discovery, but also a teacher helping us navigate the web of connected concepts.

- Every scientist is ultimately a writer — they have to produce explainable work, with every claim referenced to prior ideas. So the work on science copilots cuts to the core of mechanistic interpretability AI research. It's our mission to organize all scientific papers, and other datasets at a much higher resolution than currently possible: concept by concept.

- Our work is also at the core of the current collapse of social media — bots and now AI are flooding the web. Our research copilot is aimed at people who want to use AI intelligently to summarize large sets of materials and shield them from digital noise and low quality content.

You + our product fit

We want to build an engineering led culture, and are aiming to only hire engineers in our team. To that end, we are committed to search for engineers who themselves are potential users of our product. Please reach out if you consider yourself a life long learner, where you either read a lot, or listen to non-fiction, technical topics in your free time.

We're building Curie for professional scientists, and people who love to learn alike. You don't have to have had experience with scientific research necessarily, but unless you love to learn and collaborate with others to learn faster you are probably not a fit for this product. On the other hand, if you are constantly learning about topics in computer science, physics, math, philosophy, psychology or any other academic topic, and would like to improve your knowledge and collaborate with other likeminded people, then you may be a great fit!

About me

I realize that for a startup that has no live website I should probably overshare my profile. Here's as much information I could force myself to generate in one go, though I'm sure I left out a lot of important things.

- About me:
    - My name is Filip Victor (profiles). I grew up in Warsaw, but then left around the age 14y so my spoken Polish froze, and regressed somewhat.
    - I left Poland alone as a kid, without my family, because I couldn't stand the education in Warsaw. I decided I wanted to be a physicist, and felt that Poland doesn't have enough respect for science so preferred to focus on it somewhere else. I somehow found myself in Oxford learning from some of the best people. Very lucky break.
    - I've since been completely obsessed with science. With every year passing I want to dedicate more of my life to it. Curie is a direct expression of that interest. With it I hope to make professionals more efficient, and aspiring students to learn faster.

- My professional experience:
    - I started my first company right as I was about to start my PhD. I originally moved to San Francisco for Stanford, but realized after moving there that academia is not the best place to explore ideas. Also my particular PhD field (neuromorphic engineering, which is sort of applied physics and AI chip design) has an avg time of 8yrs, and I really didn't want to be a 32yo grad student when I finished.

    - The company I started (MetaMap) focused on vectorizing people in emerging markets (LatAm, Africa, SEA, India) helping financial services, governments and key sectors extend their services to them (e.g. credit and risk scoring, hiring automation, etc). Basically a 21st century version of what FICO score is in the US.

    - I sold MetaMap last summer (it was a merger) to my largest competitor. I grew the company to 330 people, and $700m valuation. The combined entity is probably 3-5yrs away from an IPO and continues to lead the market.

    - I ultimately led that company to be the market leader in several countries in Latin America and Africa, with 10 offices all over the world, earning tens of millions in annual recurring revenue.

- Why I sold
  - TL;DR: to start Curie.
  - Curie is not a side project for me. I had been thinking about this project for over 5yrs. Since the AI infrastructure has developed so rapidly in the last 2yrs I decided I couldn't wait any more. There's an opportunity to build a defining AI company in this space. A copilot for science research, and science learning.
  - I also wanted to build a leaner team. No sales teams, no marketing teams, and no HR. Those are important departments, but I felt like I'd rather be in a team full of engineers and scientists, with a flatter structure.
  - Despite being a solo founder and chairman of the board, I craved making decisions with an elite group of engineers and scientists, not outsiders with business degrees.
  - I wanted to come back to science, and research.
  - To maximize talent density and prioritize face to face time, I decided to completely focus on engineers in Warsaw. I just moved back to Europe earlier this year for this reason.

Remote vs in-office

At the moment we look for two types of roles:

- Remote team members and contributors, whose roles are narrower focused on a specific tech stack or problem, suited only to IC roles. These teammates may be long term or short term, and may also eventually transition to core team member status, with equity, once a relocation to one of our offices is discussed.

- Core team members, whom we consider to be founding engineers and partners. They're in our office in Warsaw 3-4days a week, and can be involved in all aspects of the business. This role requires a higher level of trust, but also a gives a higher level of autonomy and independence over projects and responsibilities. Both IC and leadership roles fit.

I make the distinction because remote roles have become very popular for many talented engineers and we want to work with all types of talented engineers. However, some people want to give more than just 40-50hrs a week, and consider their work a part of their identity. For these people this distinction has to be recognized.

Funding philosophy

- We are building a lean and profitable team, so I believe external funding may not ever be necessary. My hope is that our team will not grow beyond 100. Instead I'd rather we hit the highest profit per person mark — a far better metric to aim for. The ideal situation is to raise nothing, and grow fast. Consider that the more money a startup has raised, the more decentralized its cap table and the less in-control the team is. I know it's exciting for young startups to raise large rounds, but it's a mistake. I know from first hand experience, and from advising dozens of other startups who made the same mistake. Companies lose control when they raise money, and the day to day becomes about pleasing the board, and the hundreds of outside investors they answer to.

- We are in a lucky position not to have to raise money, but if we ever need to we have many investors already asking to invest. I raised over $120m as a solo founder, from some of the top VCs in SF and NY like Craft ventures (the partner there is Trump's AI Czar now), Tribe capital, Insight venture partners, founders of ebay, tesla, FTX (yes, the guy in prison), and many others. If we ever need to invest a large CAPEX into something like training foundational AI models I would simply turn to my past investors in the US.

- Raising money is difficult, especially when you're a first time founder, an unknown entity to fund managers. I learned it the hard way, and now advise founders at Stanford StartX accelerator and other places how to do it. I spent years learning from some of the best capital raisers in silicon valley, who