

sparks & honey
Business Bets | 2022





Business Bets 2022

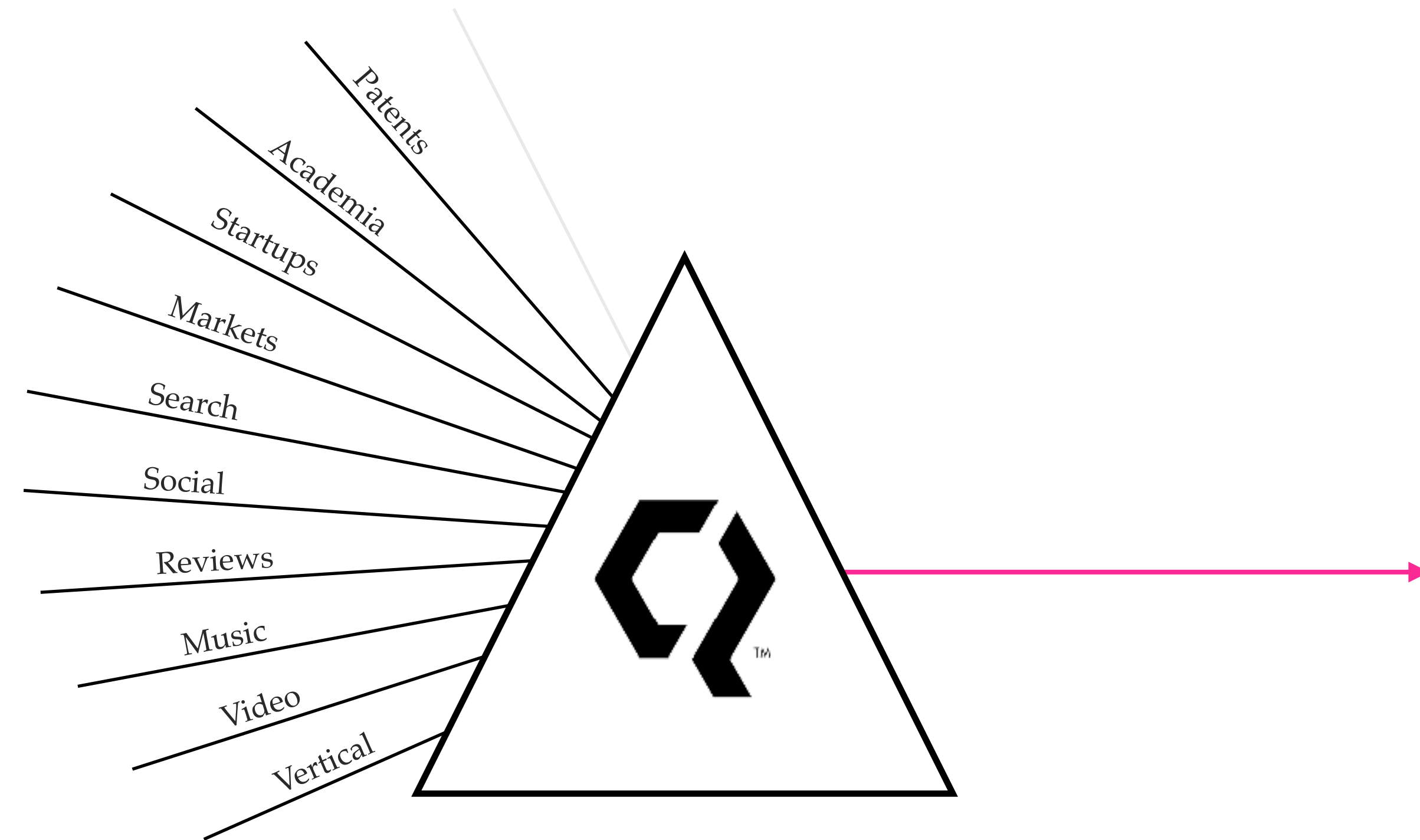
In 2022, the desire to get back to business will hit the world with full force in all areas of life and work. Challenges still abound, but so do opportunities! In this special report, sparks & honey dives into some of the key cultural shifts shaping those opportunities next year. By mining our proprietary taxonomy of 160+ Elements of Culture with the help of Q™, our always-on cultural intelligence platform, we've identified the most energetic areas of change in 2022. We then synthesized these shifts into *Business Bets* for the coming year — from tech and health to sustainability and our ever-evolving human behaviors.

We hope you'll find that extra edge in 2022.

Our Methodology

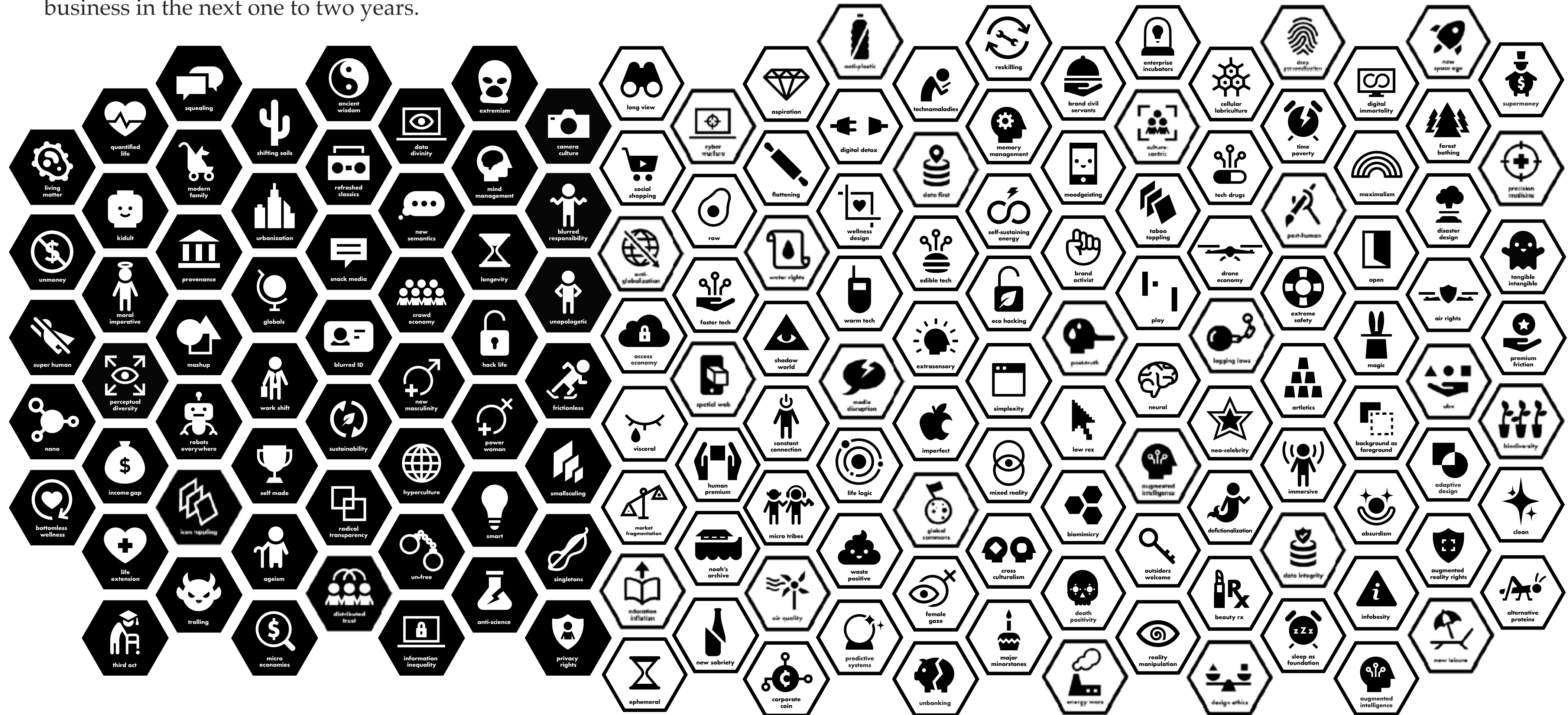
To establish our list of Business Bets for 2022, we gathered and processed cultural data and human intelligence to identify patterns and shifts that evade the human eye. We leveraged our always-on AI-powered intelligence platform Q™ to collect signals from over a million global data sources from over 140 countries in over 50 languages — 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Q™ translates the nebulous signals of culture into structured data.

Q™ uses artificial intelligence to read, contextualize and organize millions of articles, media, patents, startups and other signals of cultural change.



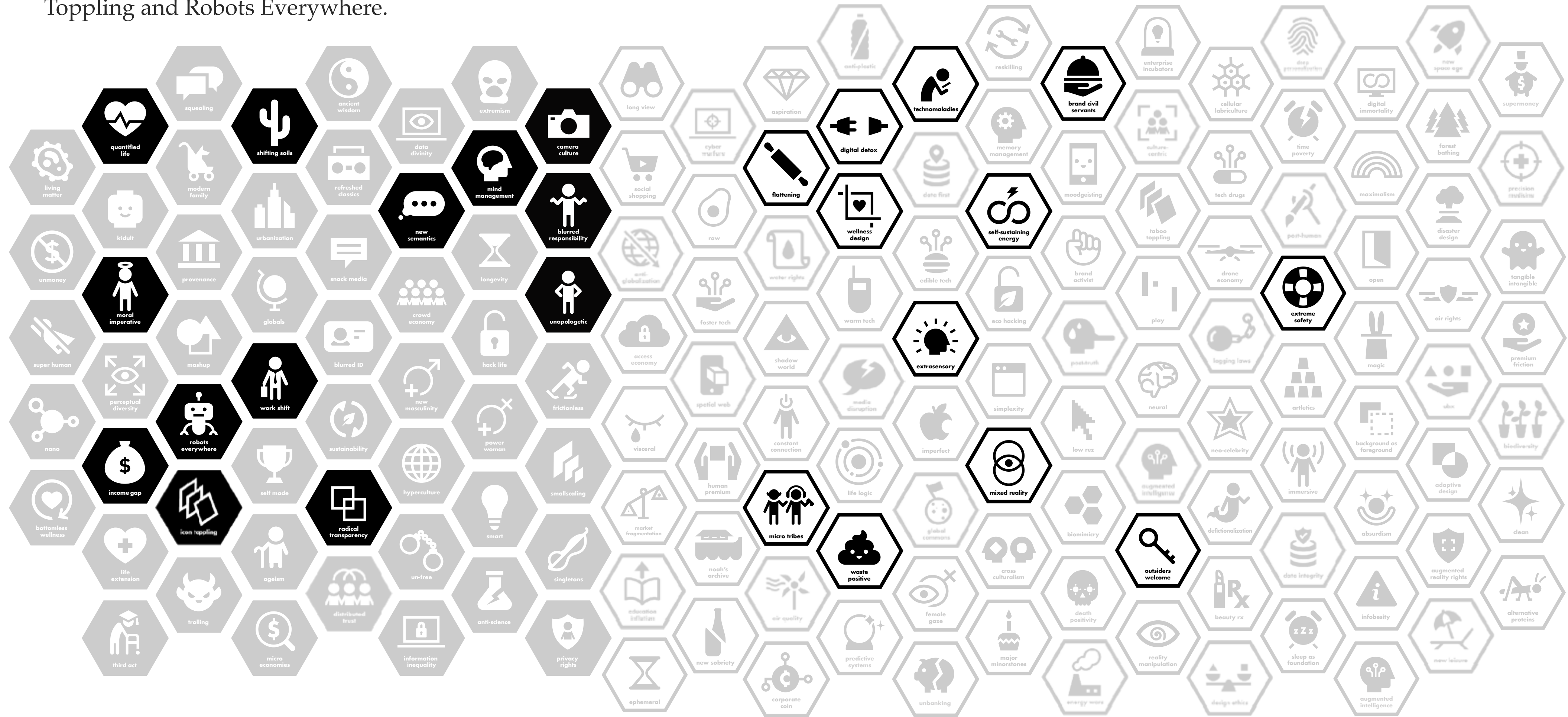
Elements of Culture

In Q™, our Elements of Culture (EOC) are used to identify the trends shaping business in the next one to two years.

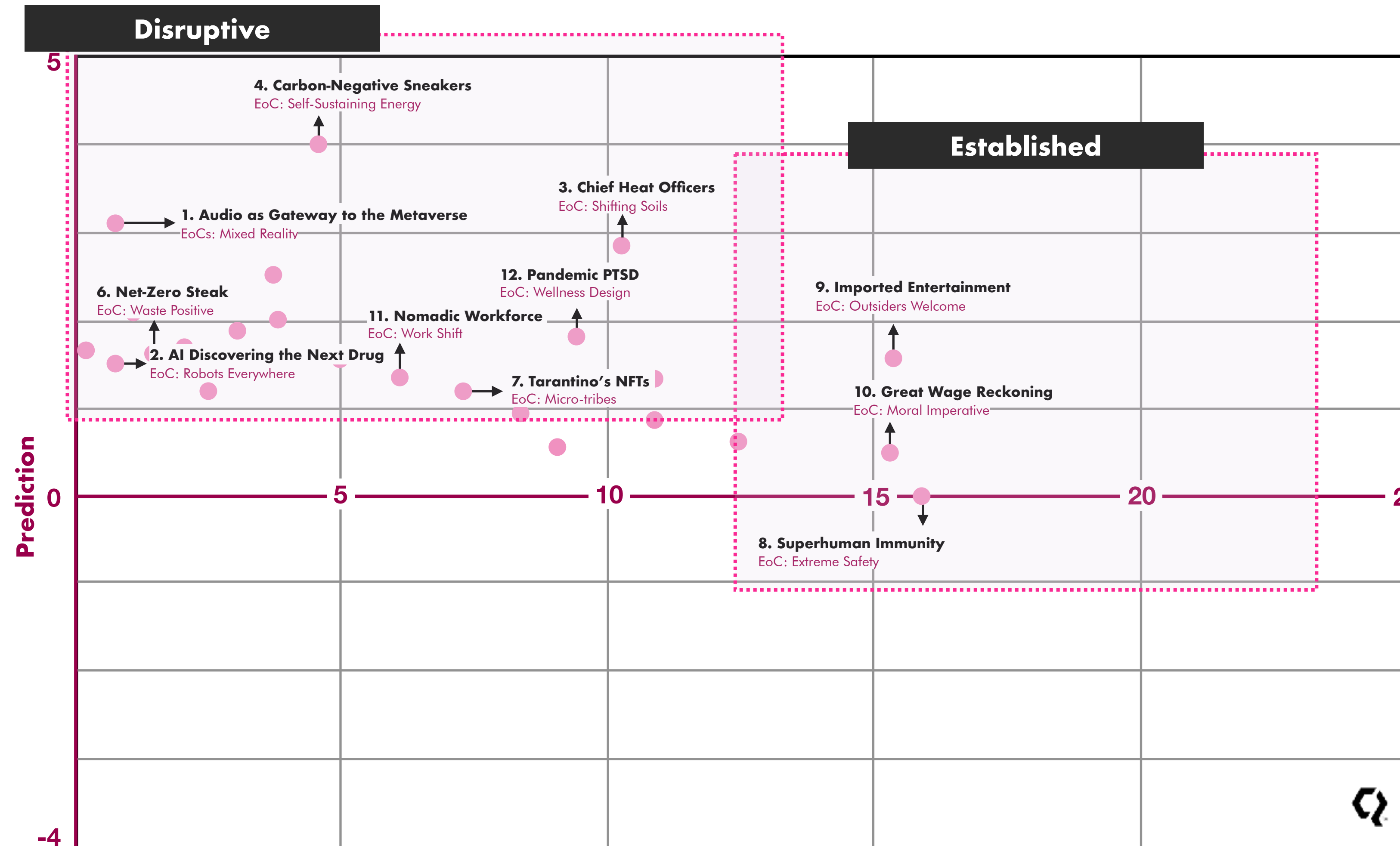


Top shifts for 2022

The top 25 mega- and macro- trends shaping 2022, such as Work Shift, Icon Toppling and Robots Everywhere.



Mapping trends shaping business in 2022



EoC: Element of Culture

sparks & honey's proprietary taxonomy of cultural trends

Prediction Score

Prediction measures the estimated growth or decline in a trend's reach over the next year.

Cultural Energy Score

Energy measures how much attention a trend is getting in culture

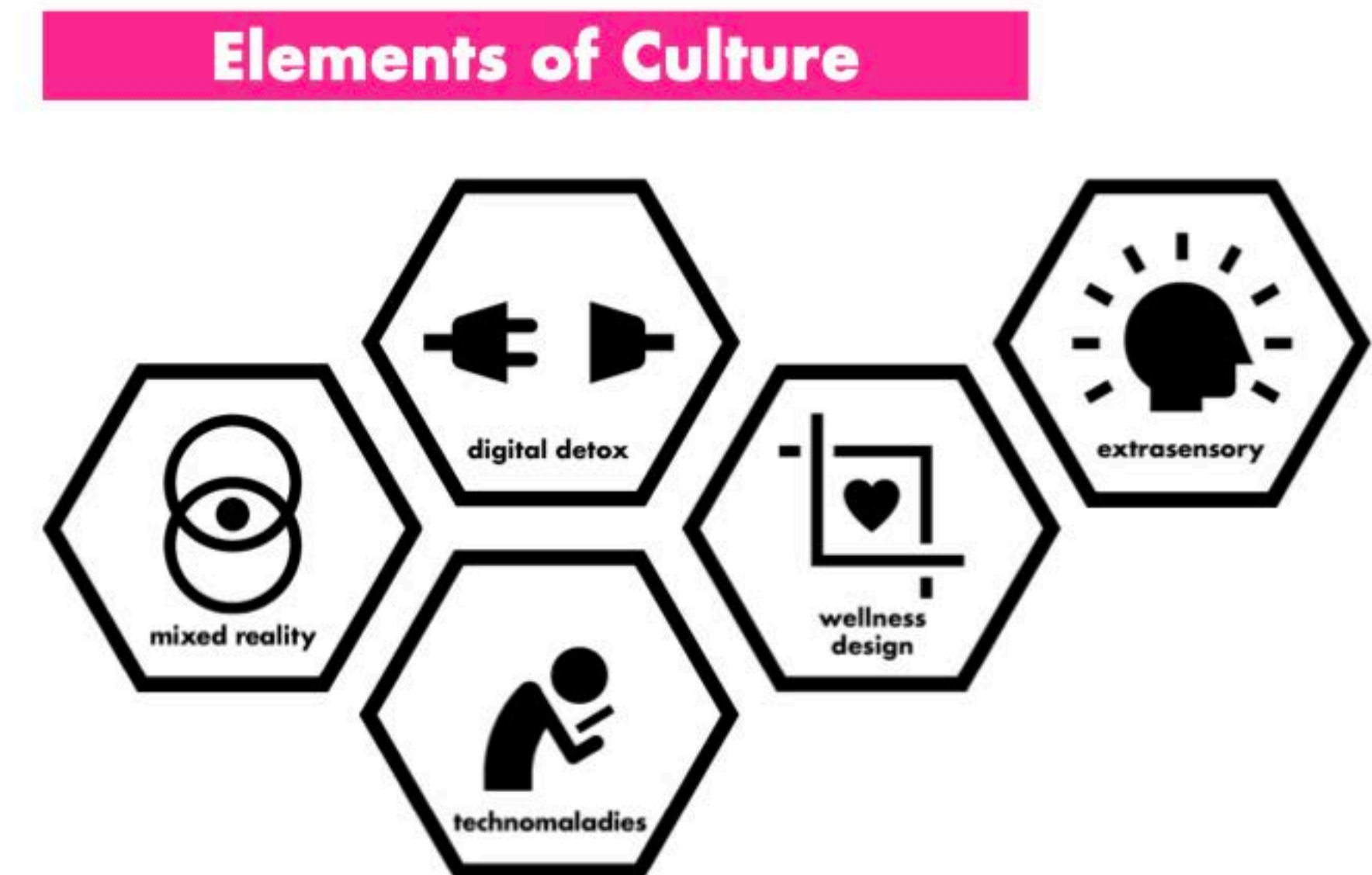
Cultural Energy



Bet on **Audio as a Gateway to the Metaverse** in 2022

We heard this was the way inside

New software applications are using sound to transport users to sonic spaces, bringing audio to the forefront of AR experiences — and as a gateway to the metaverse. The richness of sound can transport users to new experiences, affecting moods and behaviors. PairPlay, for example, is an iOS app that guides friends or family through imagined scenarios within their own homes, while Apple's recent [Airpods patent](#) includes the ability for users to create illusions of a sound source somewhere in a listening environment. From sound design to audio AR, [audio entrepreneurs are benefitting](#) from increasingly sophisticated processors, sensors that track people's movements, and devices that can deliver perfect sound. Learn more about this in [sparks & honey's Metaversity](#).



Signals



Augmented reality is coming for your ears too

Source: *Wired*



Apple has won a patent related to spatial audio

Source: *Patently Apple*



The future of augmented reality is earbuds, not eyeglasses

Source: *Digital Trends*



Hear what an office sounds like with the help of sonic ambiance

Source: *Fast Company*

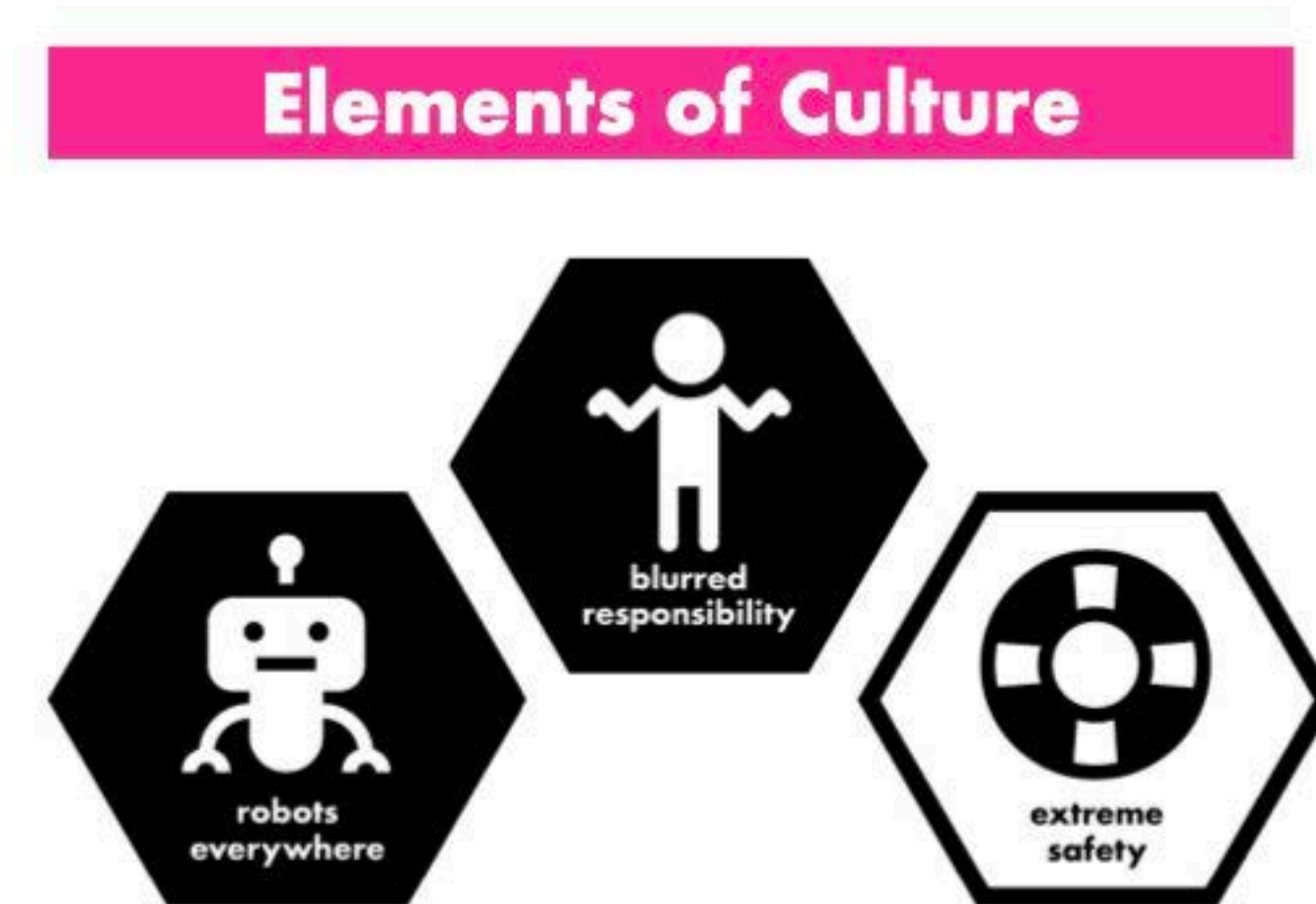
Takeaway

There's a paradigm shift to what experts are calling "earable" computing, which will change the way we individually and collectively experience and communicate in sonic spaces.

Bet on
**AI Discovering the
Next Drug**
in 2022

The next vaccine? Discovered by AI

Big tech has been inching into healthcare, and now Google's Alphabet is set on AI-drug discovery. With its recent formation of [Isomorphic Laboratories](#), Alphabet is building on research by artificial intelligence lab DeepMind, acquired by Google in 2014. Pharmaceutical empires are pairing with tech giants to process massive amounts of medical data and research [to spot promising therapies](#). The market for drug discovery technologies is expected to grow from [\\$69.8 billion in 2020 to \\$110.4 billion by 2025](#), creating unprecedented speed, scale, and discovery of drugs and therapeutics from the ground up. It's projected that pharmaceutical industries [could boost profits by up to 45 percent](#) by investing in AI.



Signals



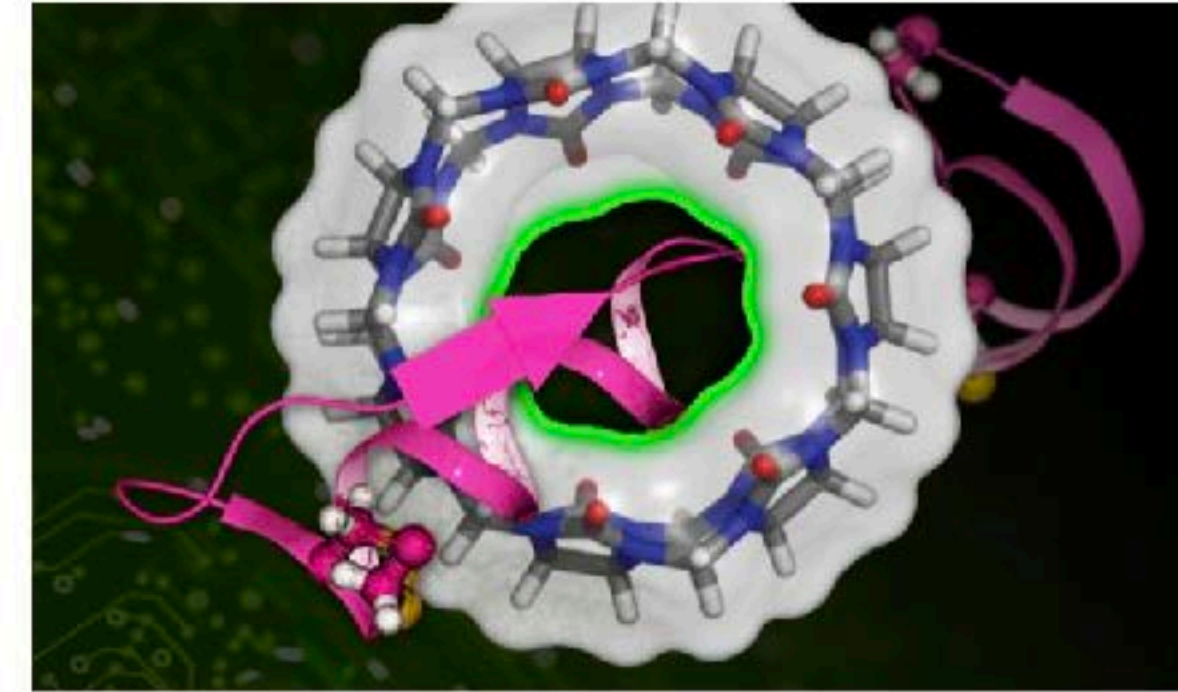
Google-parent Alphabet has set up a new lab that will use A.I. to try to discover new drugs

Source: [CNBC](#)



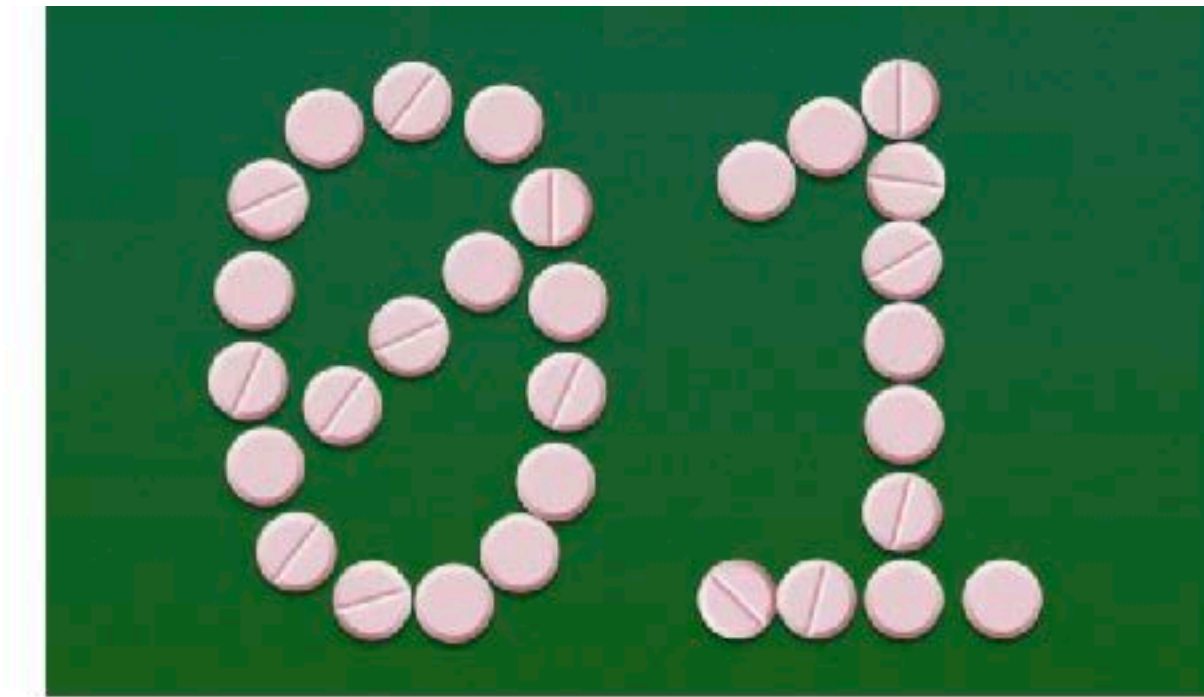
How AI is aiming at the bad math of drug development

Source: [Bloomberg](#)



Machine learning drug discovery technique speeds up calculations of drug molecules' binding affinity to proteins

Source: [MIT News](#)



The AI Pharmacist

Source: [Axios](#)

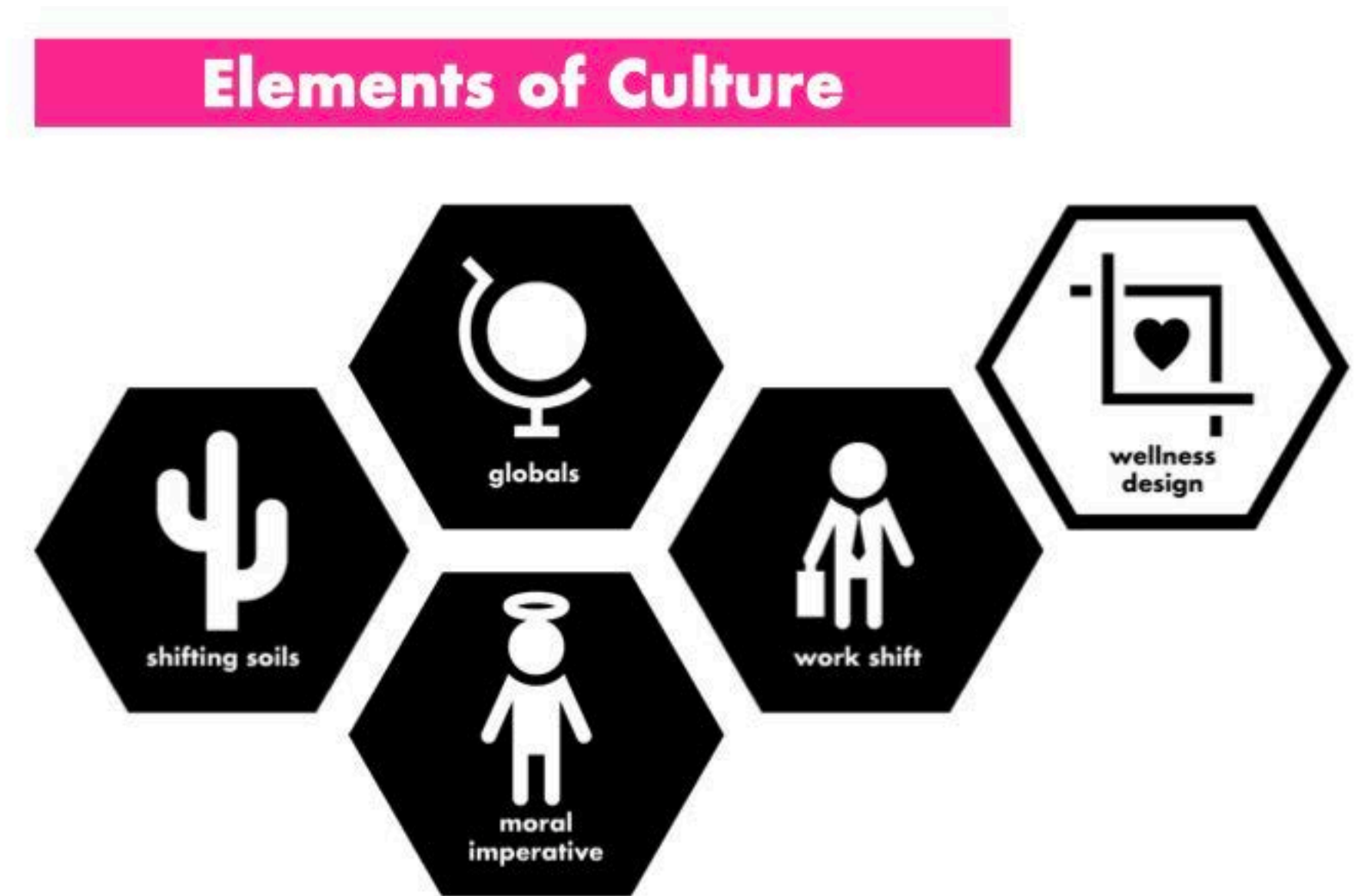
Takeaway

Machine learning and AI is speeding up drug development research and discovery at a massive scale, and rendering tech giants a growing part of the healthcare system.

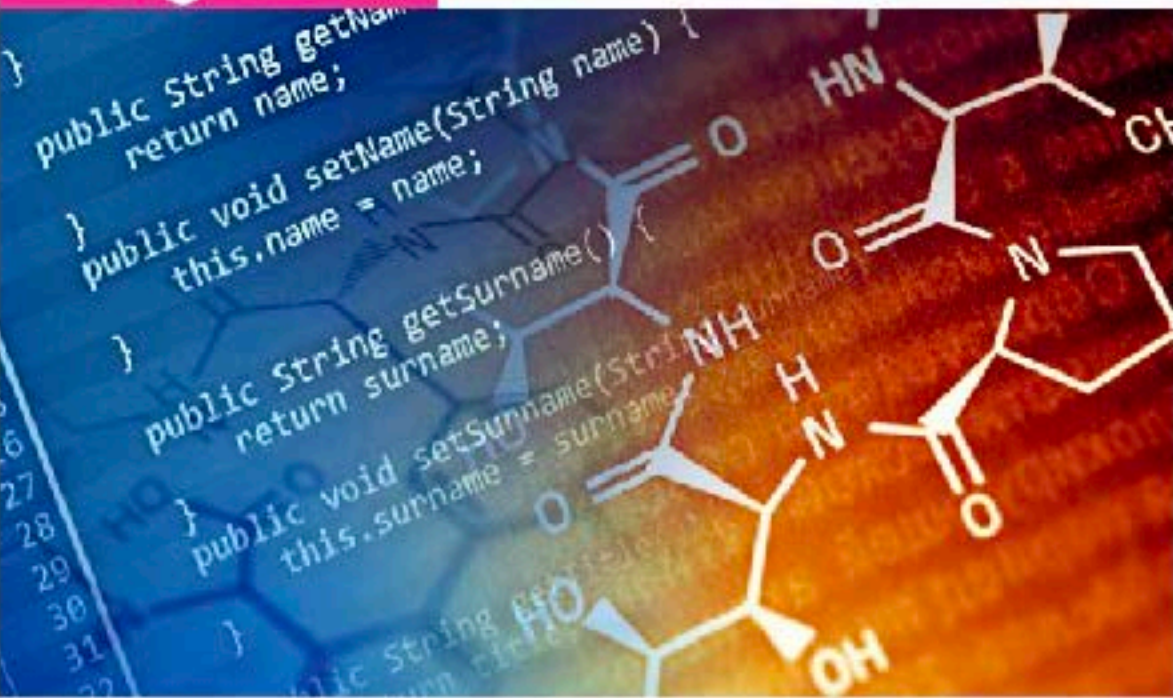
Bet on
**The Chief
Heat Officer**
in 2022

Climate adaptation fuels new jobs

The move to take concrete climate adaptation measures has an economic upside: creating new jobs, such as Chief Heat Officers. We can expect to see new roles surfacing that didn't exist before clear climate action. Cities where climate change is marked by extreme heat, from Phoenix to Miami, have introduced Chief Heat Officers to implement everything from resiliency centers, where residents can go cool off, to planting trees and educating city dwellers on climate action. At the same time, opportunities abound for innovation supporting climate efforts. AI is [designing new materials to combat climate change](#), and new climate tech funds are forming to decarbonize real estate, which accounts for [40% of greenhouse gases](#).



Signals



Chemist reimagines the discovery of materials using AI and automation to create new materials we'll need to combat climate change

Source: [Technology Review](#)



For the first time ever, large urban areas like Miami and Phoenix have hired Chief Heat Officers

Source: [World Economic Forum](#)



Fifth Wall kicks off \$140M early stage climate tech fund to decarbonize real estate

Source: [Realtybiznews](#)



'An invisible hazard': Warming cities hire chief heat officers to tackle growing threat

Source: [NBC News](#)

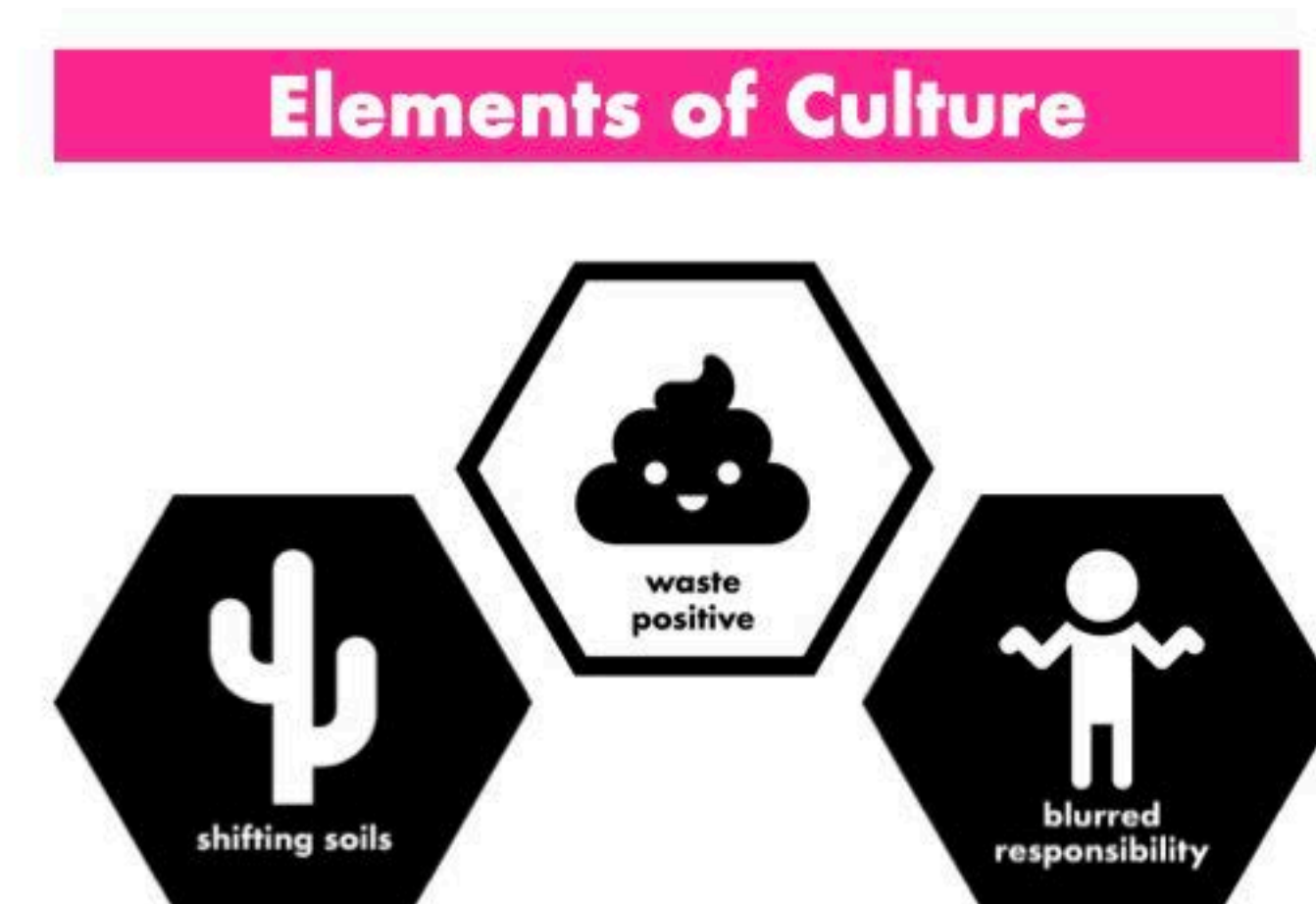
Takeaway

Climate adaptation efforts are expected to pay off in the long run, especially because it will end up costing companies who don't make these investments.

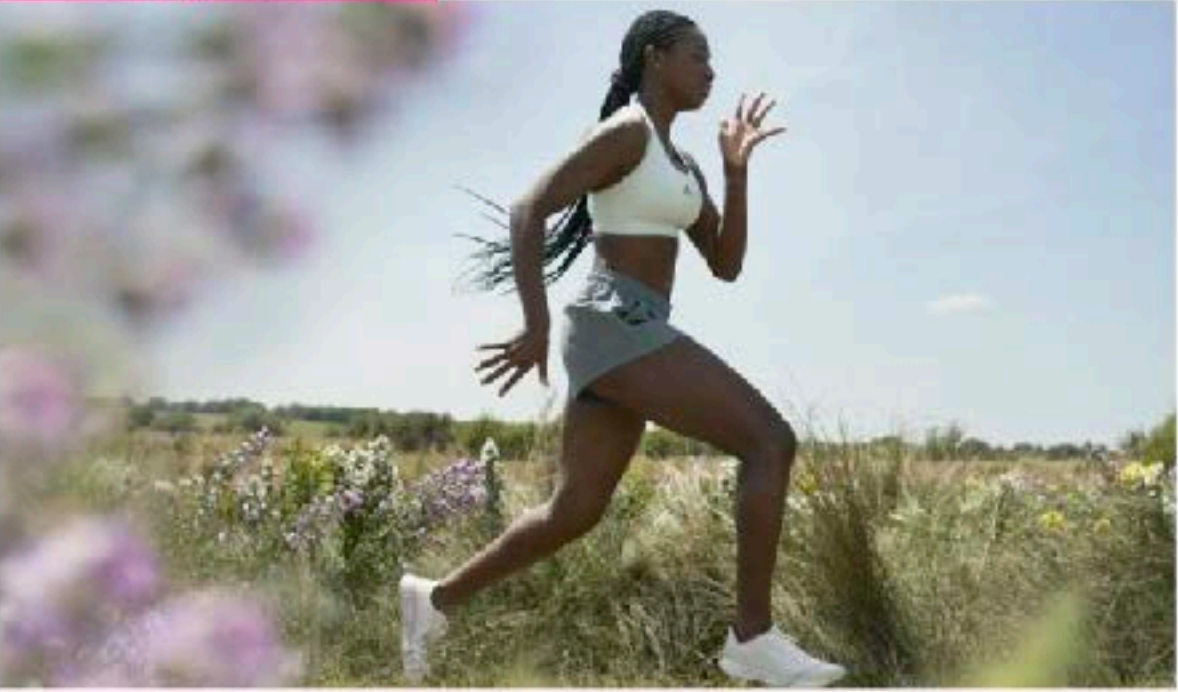
Bet on
Carbon Negative
Sneakers
in 2022

The new product spec is negative emissions

Advances in carbon technology are paving the way for brands to develop not just carbon neutral, but carbon negative products as the technologies become cheaper and more accessible. Over the last few years, startups have explored folding carbon dioxide – captured from smokestacks and other sources of pollution – directly into their products. This is [a new level of environmentally-friendly manufacturing](#) in which greenhouse gas molecules are not only kept out of the atmosphere, but also repurposed. So-called carbon-utilization has expanded to products ranging from plastics, jet fuels, diesel, chemicals, building materials, diamonds and even fish food. As businesses begin to catch up to science, the carbon tech industrial sector has the potential of reaching [\\$6 trillion globally](#).

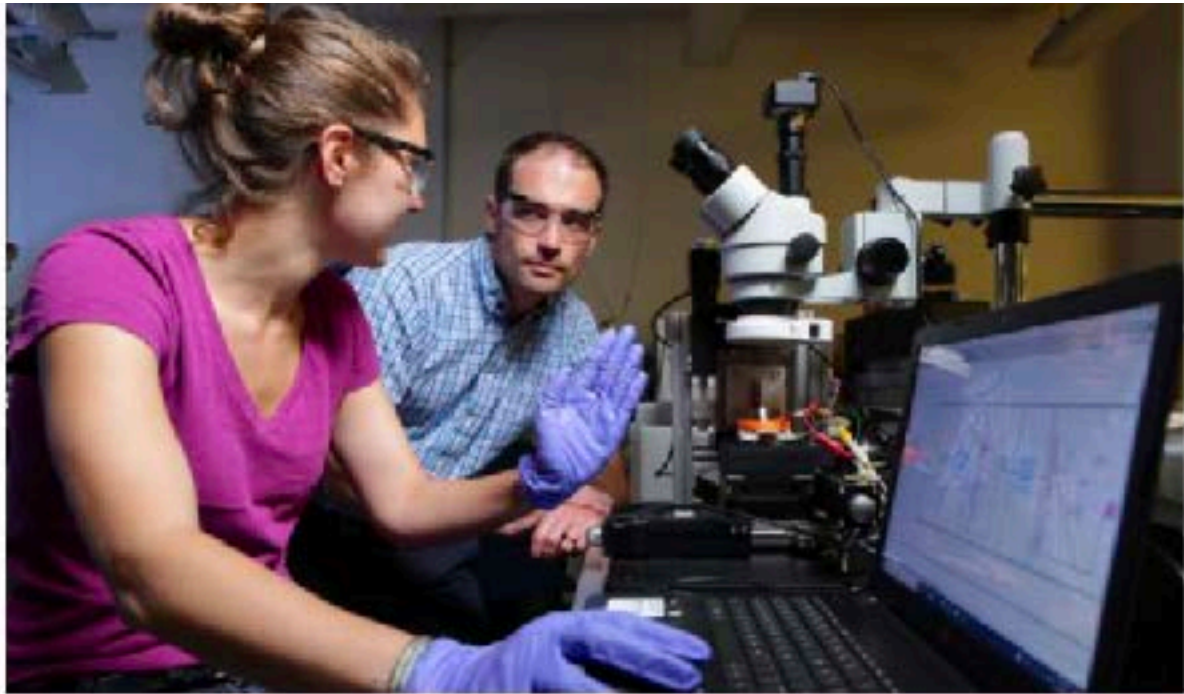


Signals



Adidas, Allbirds partner on lowest-carbon-footprint performance sneaker ever

Source: *Forbes*



Columbia Launches a Carbontech Initiative to Bring Climate Solutions to Market

Source: *Columbia University*



Energy Harvesting: a sun-powered textiles project studied how solar cell technology can be integrated into textiles

Source: *Aalto*



Capturing Carbon's Potential: These Companies Are Turning CO2 into Profits

Source: *Columbia University*

Takeaway

Carbon technology is evolving to become cheaper and more accessible, priming companies and brands to create new products with negative emission specs.

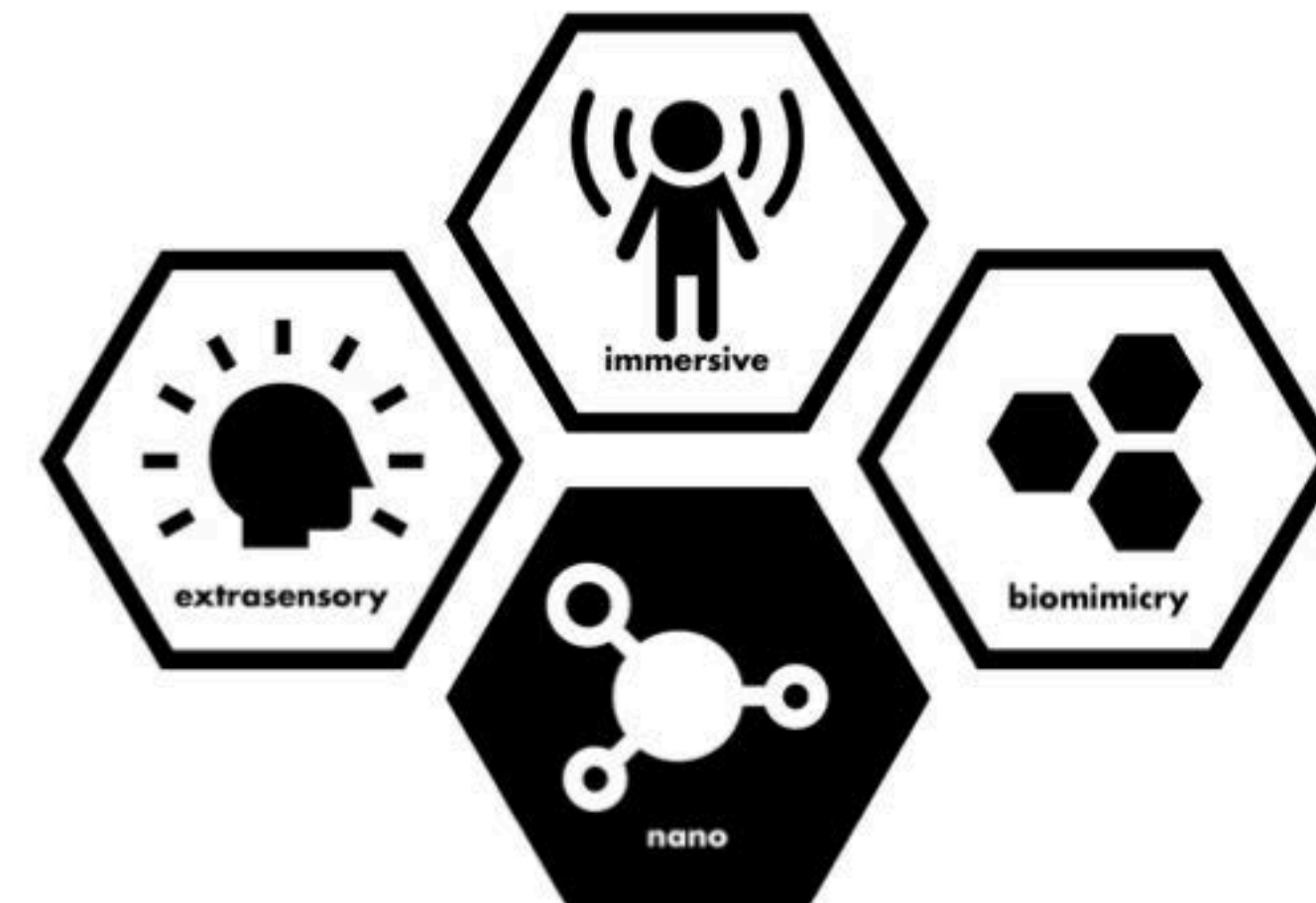


Bet on
Net-Zero Steak
in 2022

Environment stirs growing appetite for lab-grown meat

Barcelona-based Novameat's 3D printed steaks mimic the taste and flavor of beef and pork. The bioengineering firm is just one startup developing lab-grown alternatives for earth-friendly diets. The World Bank estimates that [20 to 30 percent of the Earth's carbon emissions](#) stem from agriculture, and making the right food choices can curb that carbon footprint. A further two percent of emissions comes from food production — which startups like [Israel's Aleph Farms](#), a cultivated meat company, are combating with net-zero carbon goals. Consumption habits that eliminate or curate certain foods, such as meat, highlight how what we eat can leave a mark on the planet.

Elements of Culture



Signals



Aleph Farms Reveals How it Will Achieve Net-Zero Carbon by 2025

Source: [Vegconomist](#)



Food choices matter when consumers want to reduce their carbon footprint

Source: [NPR](#)



The city of Helsinki has declared it will completely stop offering meat at its functions to spare the climate

Source: [Helsingin Sanomat](#)



Novameat eyes mass market with 3D printed vegetarian steaks

Source: [3D Printing Industry](#)

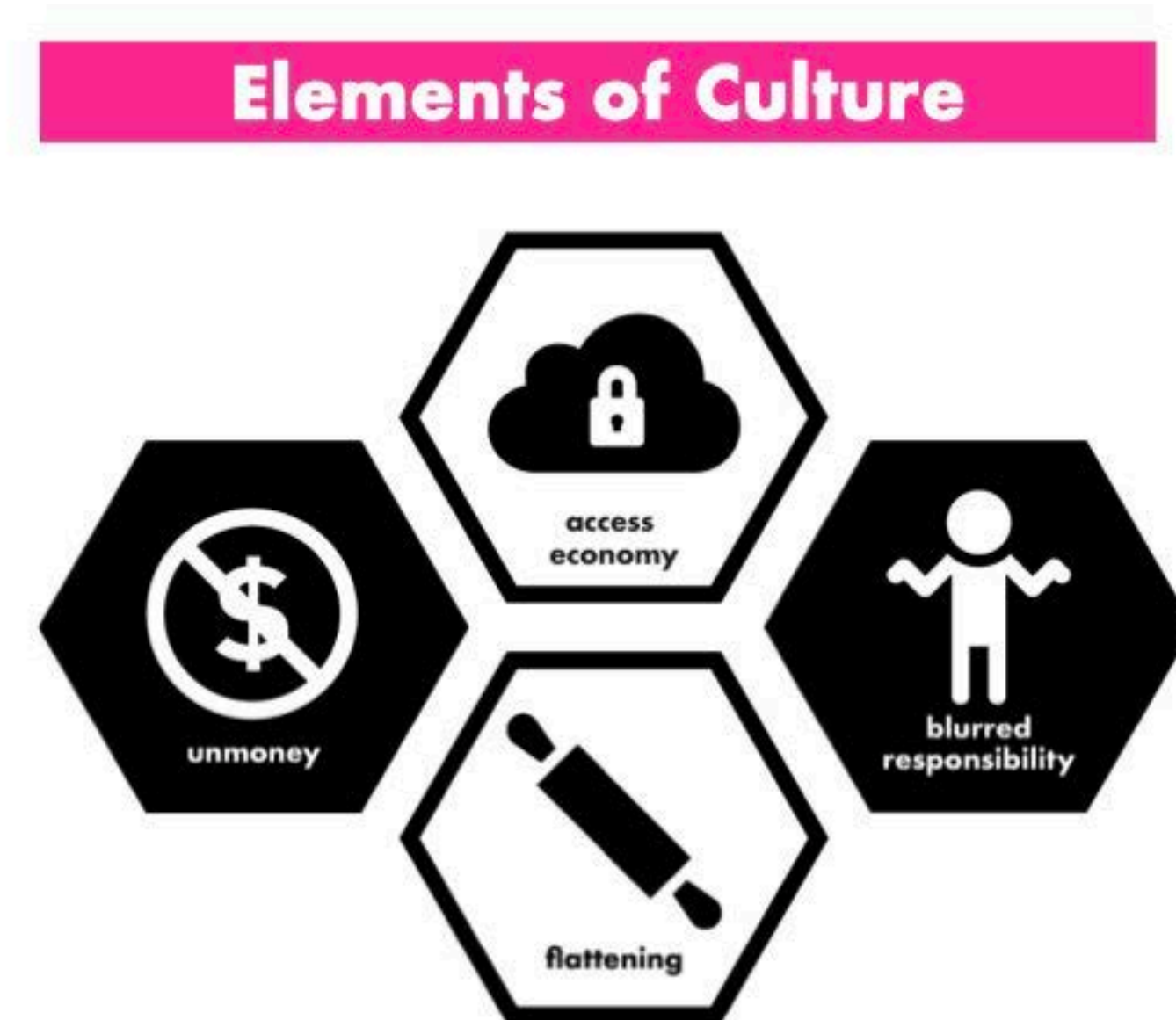
Takeaway

Lab-grown meat alternatives are moving from the lab to the plate, as the conscious consumption of food becomes another way to reduce your carbon footprint.

Bet on
Tarantino's NFT
in 2022

Monetizing ownership and fandom

NFTs, or non-fungible tokens, are disrupting long-set notions of value, setting up creators and brands alike to monetize digital collectibles from artwork to memes and movie scenes. Popularized by the art world, and memes like 'little girl in the backseat' (which was sold as an NFT), NFTs are creating a digital economy that arms users with the power to assign value, cutting out the middleman. The unregulated wild west of NFTs is already rearing its head. Director Quentin Tarantino created NFTs of exclusive scenes from his 1994 film "Pulp Fiction," only to be sued in turn by Miramax for doing so.



Signals



Tarantino sued by studio for Pulp Fiction NFT

Source: *Hollywood Reporter*



Nike files to sell its downloadable sneakers

Source: *Wall Street Journal*



Sotheby's debuts NFT collection IRL and in the Metaverse

Source: *Jing Culture and Commerce*



Creator NFTs can be sold through TikTok videos

Source: *The Drum*

Takeaway

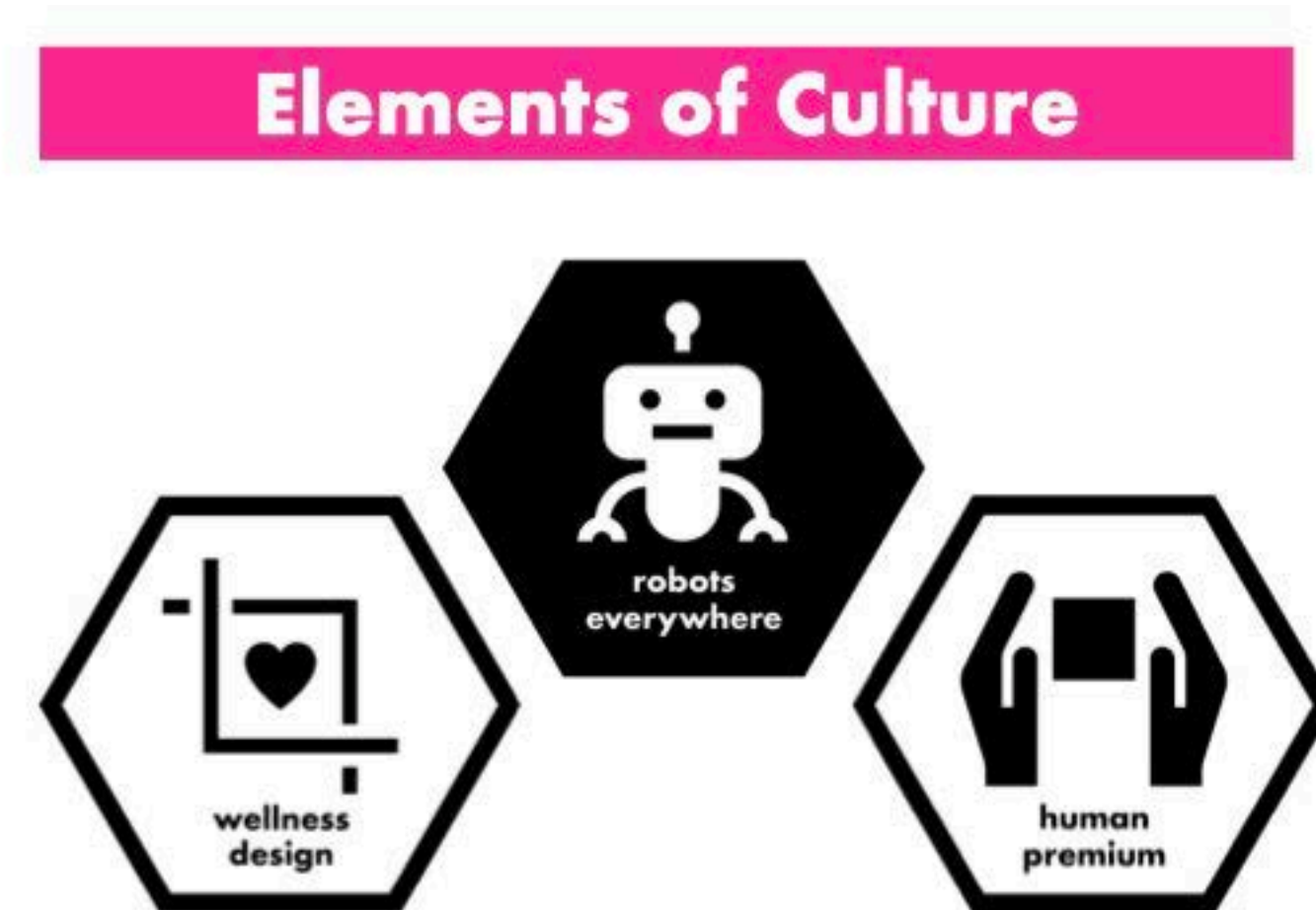
The financial sector and regulators may be concerned, but NFT owners care little about regulation. In Korea, policymakers have butted heads over what to do with NFTs. With vast digital footprints and inevitable barriers with regulation, the long-term financial prospects of NFTs are unknown, even if they rise in popularity.

Bet on **Superhuman Immunity** in 2022



mRNA therapeutics revolutionize disease treatment

The field of mRNA therapeutics is exploding, setting unprecedented advancements in medicine — as well as the prospect of superhuman immunity to future viruses. Two years ago, mRNA therapeutics were unheard of outside of the lab of mRNA pioneer Dr. Anna Blakney, a [now TikTok famous](#) bioengineering professor from the University of British Columbia. But the pandemic has skyrocketed mRNA vaccines into the mainstream as a safer and faster vaccine than traditional vaccine development. Researchers posit that [mRNA therapeutics could help in eradicating cancers, HIV, tropical diseases](#), and even provide mere mortals with a level of “exceptionally powerful” immunity, according to [The New England Journal of Medicine](#).

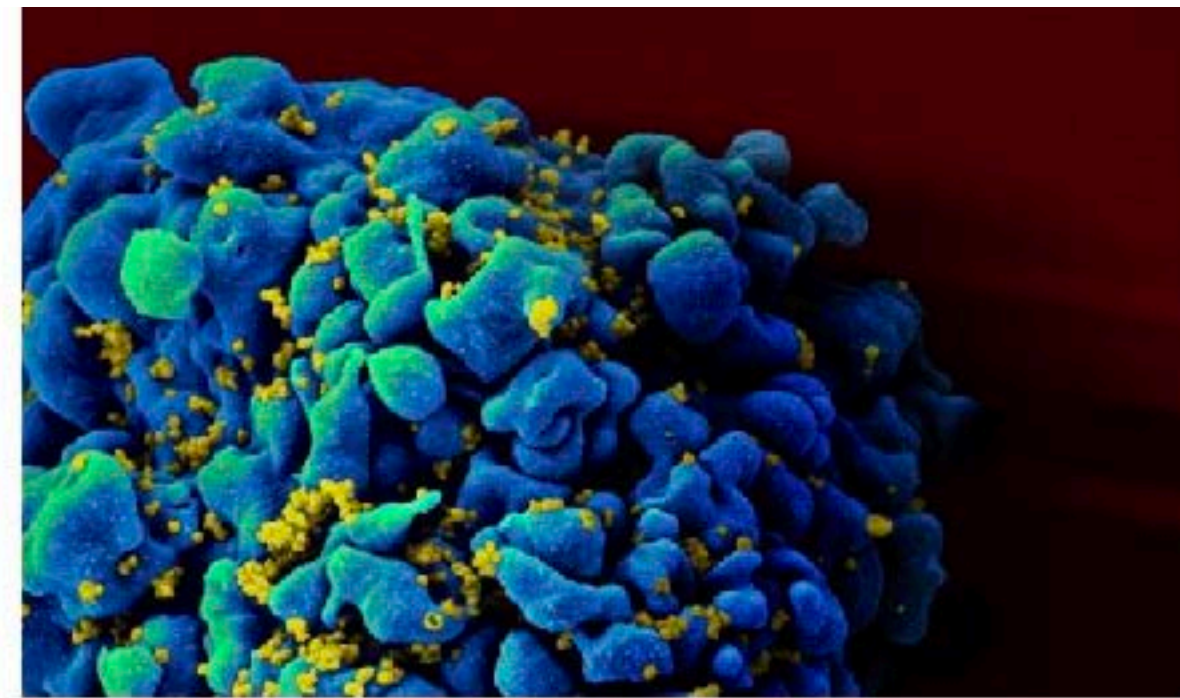


Signals



Could mRNA make us superhuman?

Source: [BBC](#)



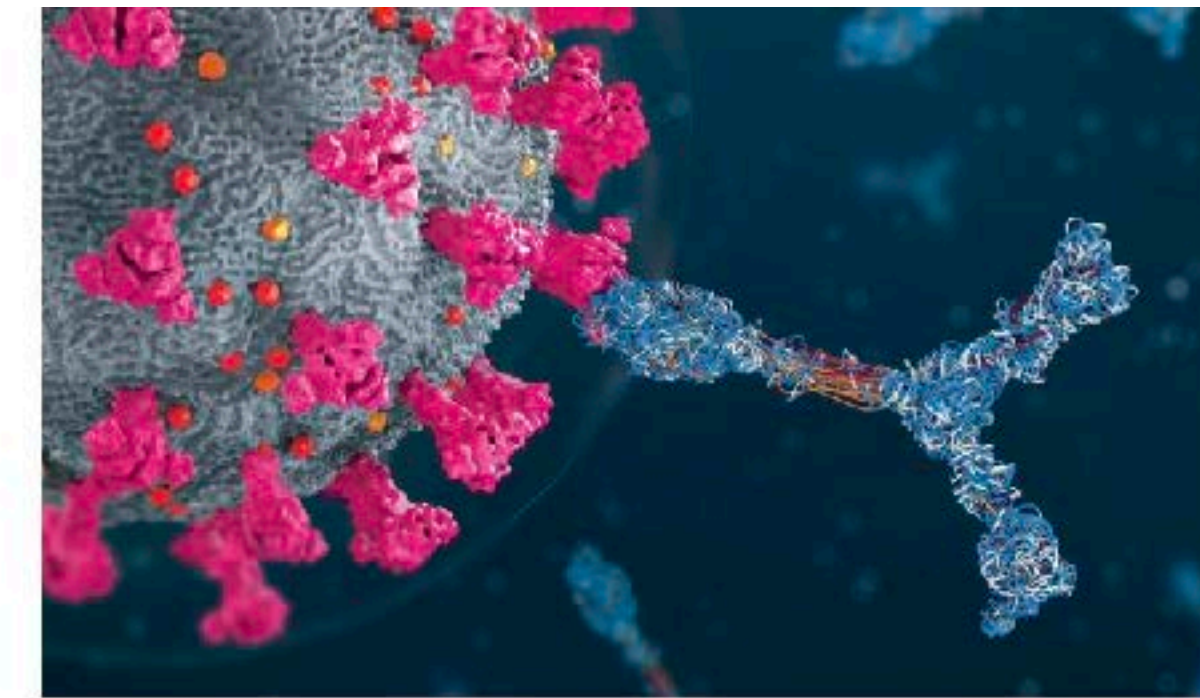
Moderna to begin human trials for two experimental HIV vaccines

Source: [Smithsonian Mag](#)



A lab-stage mRNA vaccine targeting ticks may offer protection against Lyme and other tick-borne diseases

Source: [The Conversation](#)



New studies find evidence of 'superhuman' immunity to covid-19 in some individuals

Source: [NPR](#)

Takeaway

Thanks to coronavirus vaccines, mRNA therapeutics are in the public consciousness, popularizing medical experts and raising hopes for unprecedented treatments for a variety of diseases.

EL JUEGO
DEL
CALAMAR

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Business Bets | 2022

TOP 10
Ve la temporada 1

Cientos de jugadores
extraña invitación
Adentro les esperan
mortal.

▶ Reproducir



16+

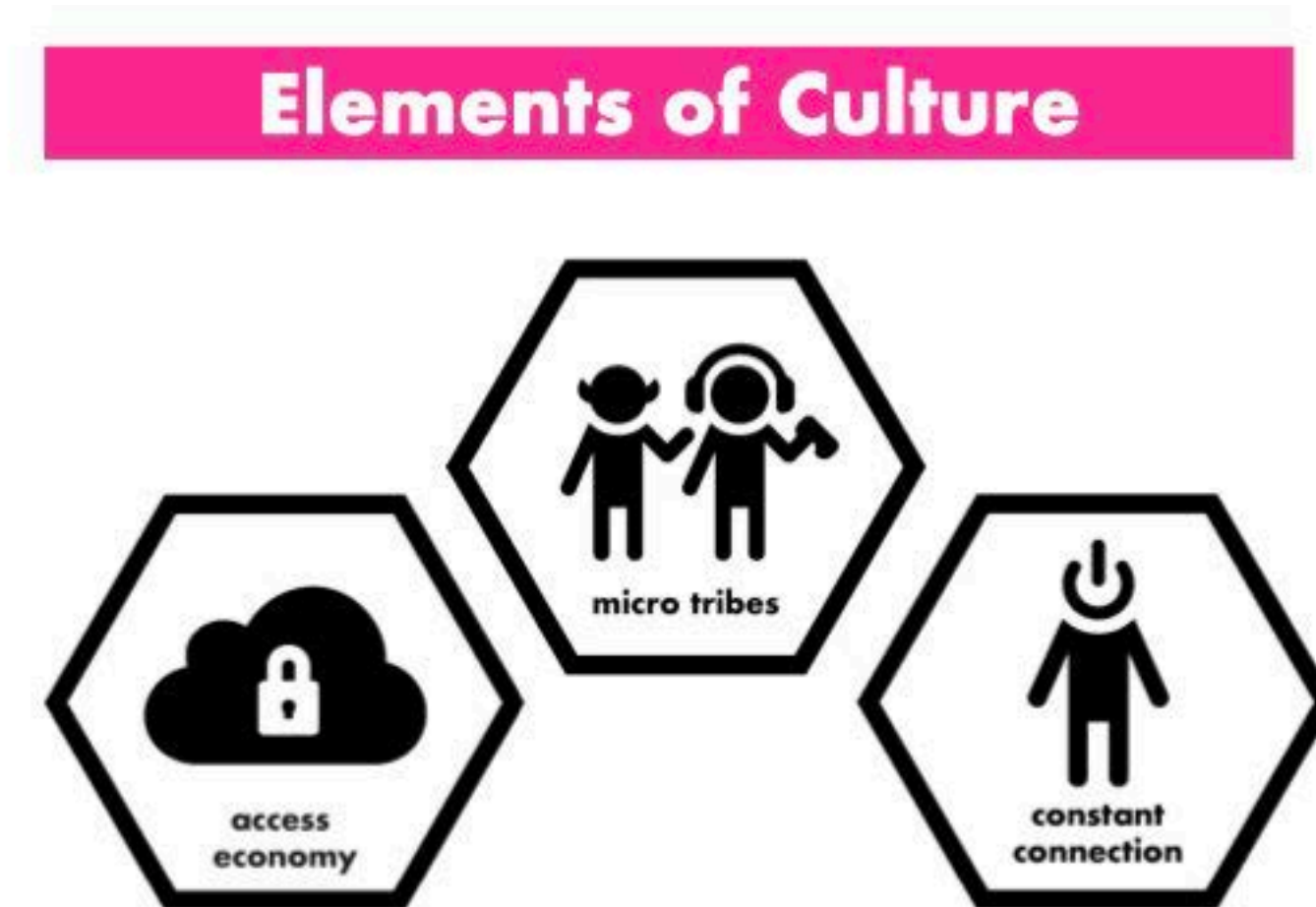
Dramas de TV

Bet on Imported Binge Watching in 2022



Reversing the flow of exported U.S. entertainment to imported global-tainment

The longstanding might of the U.S. as an entertainment powerhouse is shifting with the importing of global mainstream content in series, movies, and entertainment from around the world. The desire for entertainment skyrocketed amid the pandemic, highlighting a growing appetite for everything from K-pop to hit series like Squid Game from Korea and Nordic Noirs from northern Europe. The access and hunger for globalized pop culture is rapidly diversifying both production and entertainment in the U.S. and beyond, and enriching the global media landscape.



Signals



Netflix's big bet on foreign content and international viewers could upend the global mediascape

Source: *The Conversation*



Asia Pacific-based content investment is a growing goal for streaming platforms like Netflix, which had its biggest series launch ever through Korean drama 'Squid Game'

Source: *CNN*



BTS' Korean label buys Justin Bieber's management company

Source: *The Guardian*



'Efficient' production hubs like Spain's Madrid Content City will rival Hollywood in global media production, but in a more sustainable way

Source: *Madrid Content City*

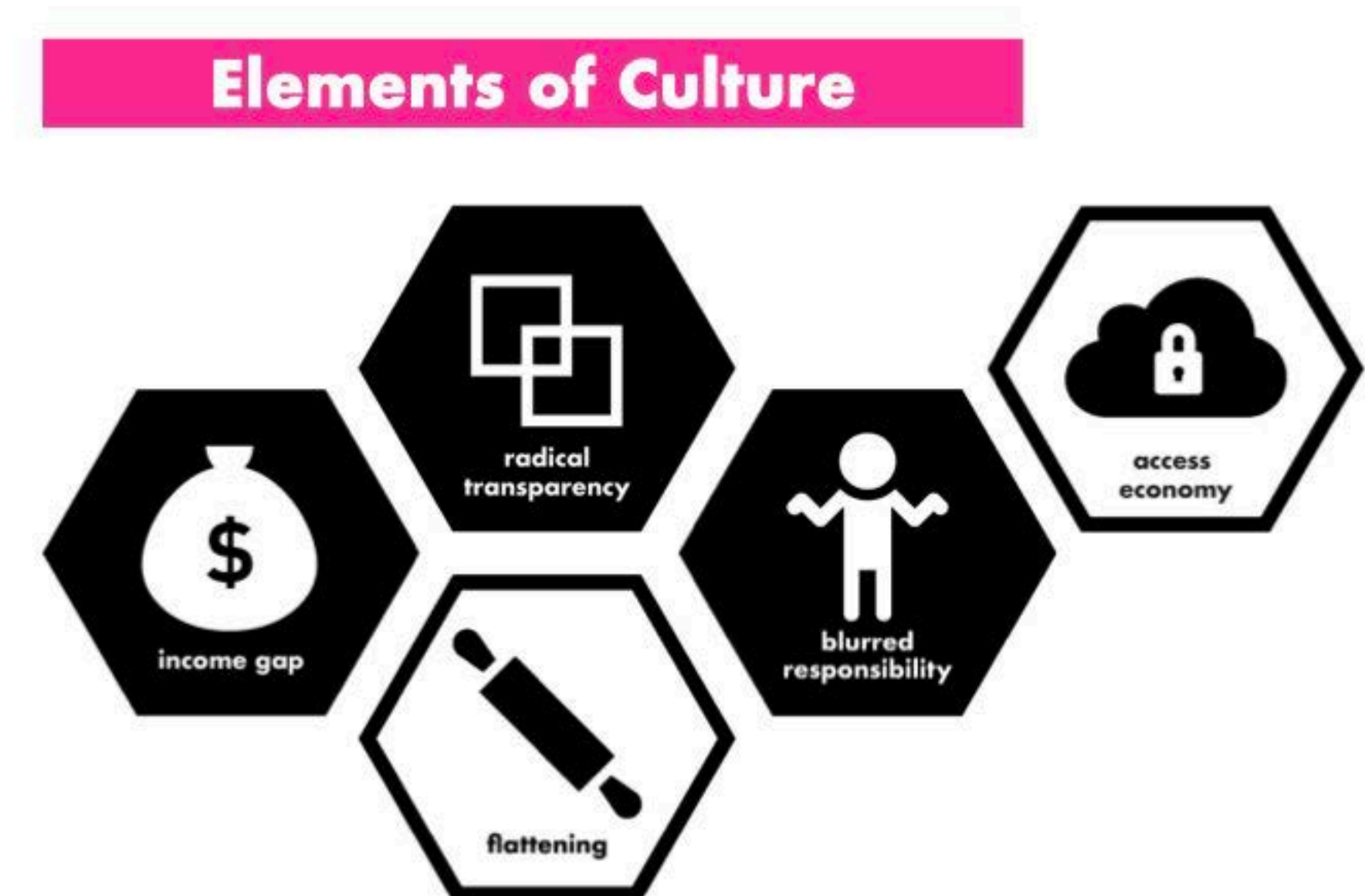
Takeaway

Embracing a diverse culture means betting on diverse forms of content and entertainment, and investing in voices that represent a global culture.

Bet on The Great Wage Reckoning in 2022

Roaring demands from marginalized workers

The pandemic has highlighted societal and economic disparities, including wage inequities in the workplace. Among a wave of resignations, rising inflation, and growing dissent among workers, many businesses are responding with wage increases, particularly in lower paid sectors which have previously been left without benefits or mass increases. In hospitality and leisure, wages have increased 18 percent over the last six months. We can expect growing dissent among workers who have long been marginalized, whether due to gender, minimum wage, working hours, or other patterns that have kept wages low for certain groups.



Signals



Latinas are still the lowest paid group in the US

Source: *The Lilly*



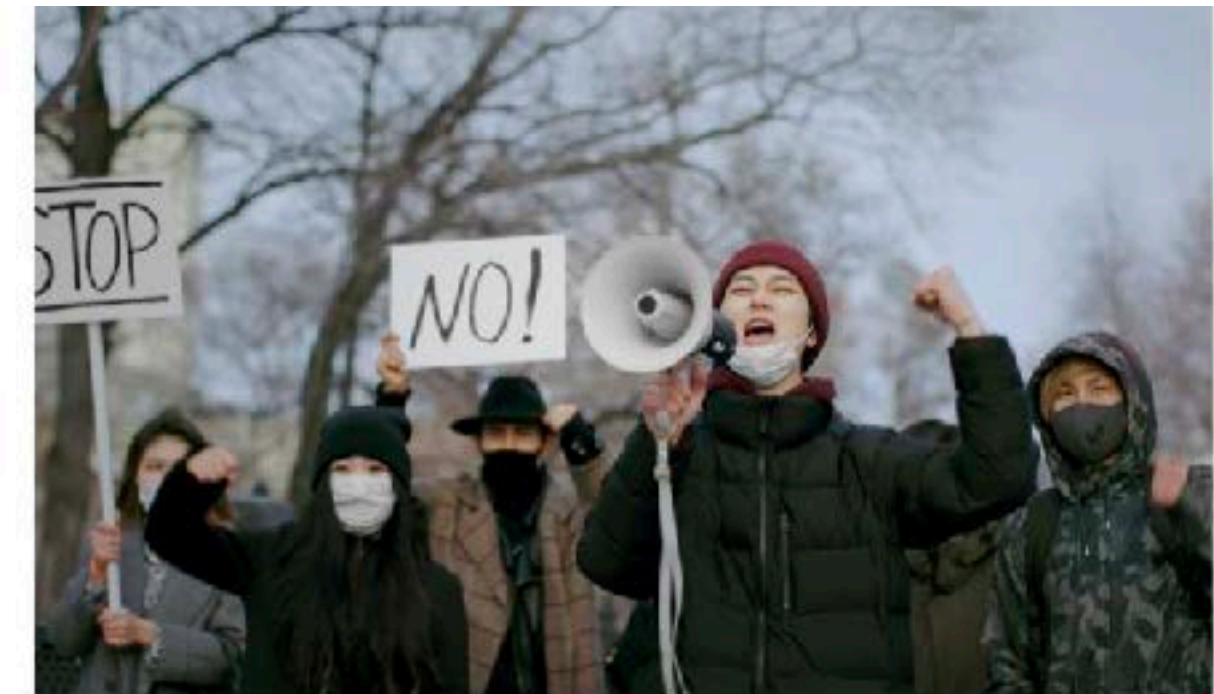
Latest jobs report: wages are up, especially in low-paying sectors

Source: *Marketplace.org*



Starbucks hikes wages to attract employees

Source: *Reuters*



John Deere strike ends after workers agree to hefty pay rise

Source: *NBC News*

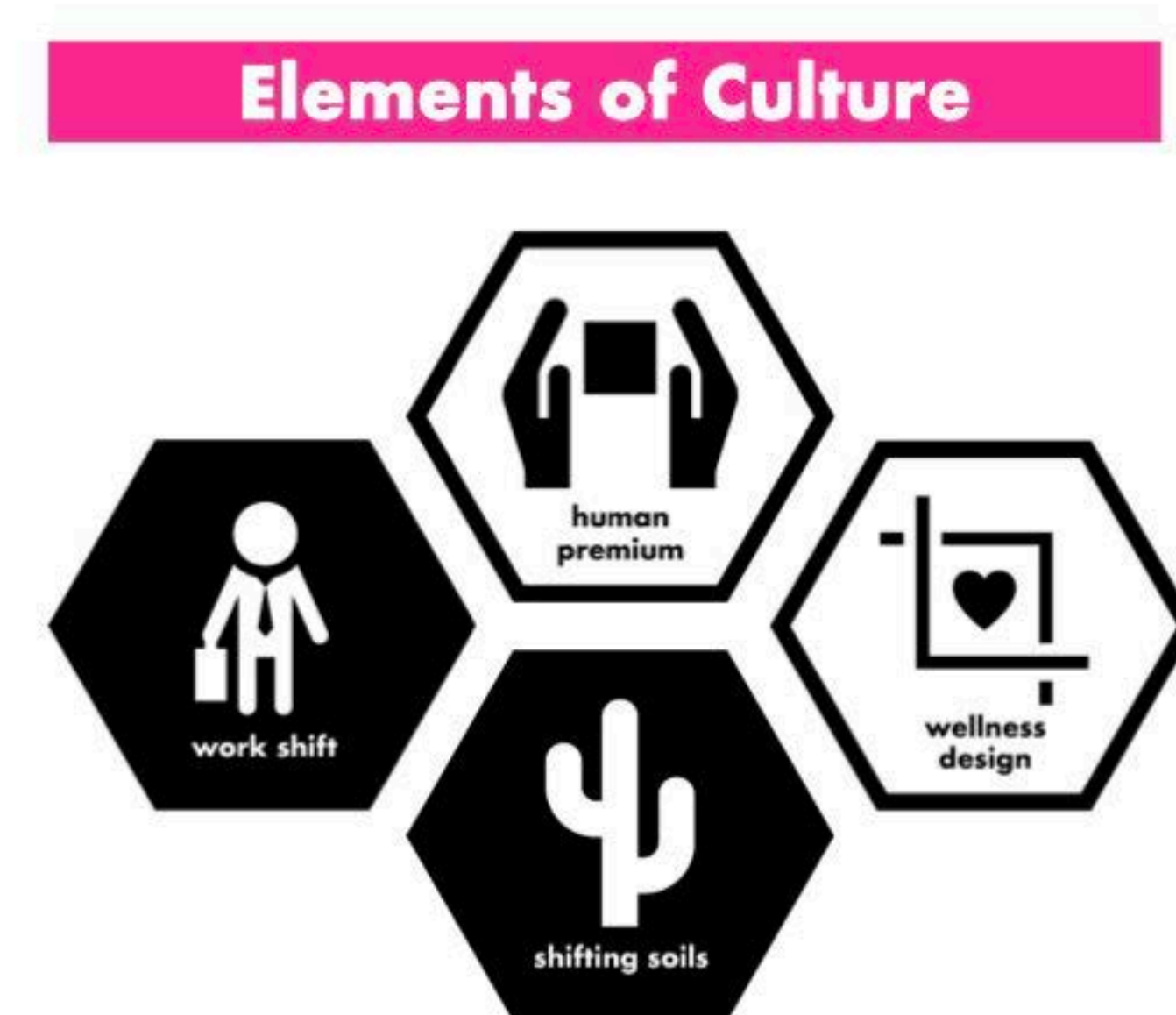
Takeaway

Strengthen diversity, equity & inclusion practices to spotlight workers who may have been left on the periphery.

Bet on The Nomadic Workforce in 2022

Gen Z workforce expects flexibility, forever

The pandemic quickly manifested new ways of working, which, for many, can be from anywhere. It's a change that has fundamentally shifted employees' expectations – and they will look to future employers to meet their needs for flexibility in where and how they work. The untethered worker is one example of a new emerging workforce, unattached to a location and willing to explore. [The search for meaning](#) includes not just work, but how we live and spend our days. The rise in employee demands and the need to attract talent supports the curiosity-seeking employee in this kind of hybrid lifestyle. At a time when nearly half of businesses will have fully remote workforces, companies can bet on adjusting workplace policies to accommodate untethered employees.



Signals



Free to work remotely, young Americans are covid road tripping

Source: *Bloomberg*



Remote work may affect your 2021 income taxes

Source: *U.S. News & World Report*



Netherlands builds a solar-powered motor home that travels up to 740 km a day, while powering up a laptop, TV and coffee-maker

Source: *World Economic Forum*



Japanese builders offer zen home office kit

Source: *The Guardian*

Takeaway

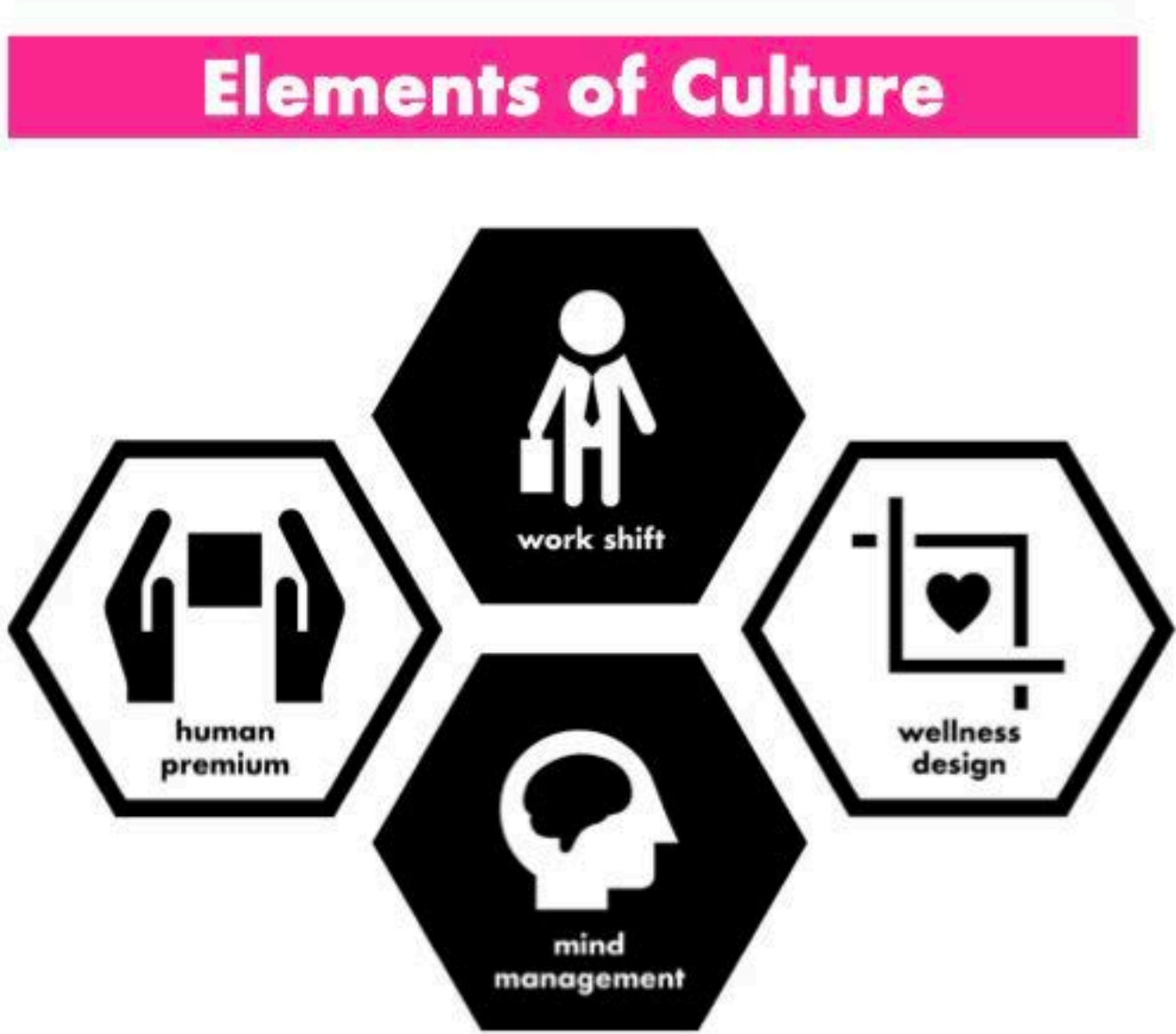
Your current and incoming workforce has permanently shifted to radical expectations of workplace flexibility.

Bet on Mental Health Communities in 2022

Please Do not Use This Seat

Wanted: a company that won't kill you

Nearly [two-thirds of U.S. workers are looking for new jobs](#), while a record number have called it quits altogether. [Nine out of ten executives](#) say they're seeing higher turnover than ever. It's no wonder, when [94 percent of workers](#) say they're stressed. The demands of coping in a pandemic while working – whether it's stretched parents, airline pilots dealing with a constant cycle of long shifts, or quarantines and related isolation – are leaving their mark with long-term physical and emotional stress. Behavioral experts are citing [post-covid stress disorder](#) – manifesting in mood disorders, sleep issues, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, and other stressors – that affects how people show up, or don't, in the world. From [therapy voice bots](#) to community groups, the demand for mental health platforms and empathy-based leadership is only rising.



Signals



Locked in: Hong Kong's Covid-19 rules take mental toll on pilots

Source: *Japan Times*



94% of workers are stressed, KPMG research reveals

Source: *Forbes*



Digital communities help deal with pandemic blues

Source: *The Jakarta Post*



Who is driving the Great Resignation?

Source: *Harvard Business Review*

Takeaway

Companies have growing stakes in ensuring the well-being of their people — pandemic-related PTSD will need longer-term wellness solutions.

sparks & honey

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