

Founding-Stage Brand Architecture

AI-Powered Scientific Discovery Platform

End-to-end brand creation for a Swiss-funded venture building proprietary AI reasoning technology for immunobiology and novel therapeutics research.

SCOPE OF ENGAGEMENT

Brand Naming · Mission Statement · Content Strategy · Tagline Development · Messaging
Architecture · Visual Strategy Direction

THE BRIEF

A Venture in Search of an Identity

A Swiss philanthropic foundation was preparing to launch a new venture: a purpose-built AI platform designed to accelerate scientific discovery in immunobiology and novel therapeutics. The technology, a proprietary scientific reasoning engine trained on private medical datasets, was ambitious and technically sophisticated. But the venture had no public-facing identity. It had no name, no positioning, no messaging framework and no content strategy. The founding team needed to move from internal R&D to a credible market presence, capable of speaking to academic researchers, biotech firms, government grant agencies and prospective AI talent at the same time.

CLIENT	ROLE	SCOPE	RESULT
AI venture of a Swiss philanthropic foundation	Sole content and brand strategist	Name, mission, taglines, messaging for four audiences	Identity adopted in full

THE CHALLENGE

The venture needed to reconcile several competing tensions: scientific rigour with commercial ambition, institutional pedigree with startup energy, and a narrow domain focus (immunobiology) with broader appeal to talent and partners. The founding team also lacked consensus on how narrowly to position the brand, whether to lead with a specific scientific vertical or keep the framing broad enough to accommodate future pivots. Every messaging decision carried strategic implications.

MY ROLE

I was engaged as the sole content and brand strategist, responsible for the complete identity build-out from first principles. This encompassed brand naming, mission statement authorship, tagline development with strategic rationale, audience segmentation and persona development, messaging architecture across four stakeholder groups, content strategy planning (scoped at 120–160 hours), and visual strategy direction. The engagement required sustained strategic thinking alongside high-quality copywriting at every level of the brand.

TARGET AUDIENCES

Academic Researchers	University-based scientists in immunobiology and related fields
Biotech & Pharma R&D	Commercial R&D departments seeking to accelerate drug discovery
Government Grant Agencies	Public funding bodies evaluating research viability
AI Talent	Machine learning engineers and data scientists for recruitment

STRATEGIC APPROACH

Building from First Principles

Before any visual design or copywriting, I ran a strategic discovery phase: stakeholder interviews, competitive landscape analysis, audience research, and a brand audit of existing materials. This foundational work showed that the venture's most powerful positioning lay in the tension between institutional heritage and disruptive ambition. The founding entity lent gravitas; the technology demanded boldness. Every subsequent deliverable was designed to hold the two in balance.

DELIVERABLES

01 Brand Naming & Rationale

I developed multiple brand name candidates, each with etymological analysis, competitive clearance research, and strategic rationale. The selected name was chosen for its dual meaning, connoting both institutional lineage and fresh emergence, while carrying a phonetic echo of “science” that reinforced domain positioning without being prescriptive. The naming process also considered future-proofing, so that the brand would remain coherent as the venture's scope evolved.

02 Mission Statement

The mission statement went through three major iterations, each calibrated to a shifting strategic brief. It needed to communicate urgency about the broken research pipeline, articulate the reasoning engine's unique value, and address four distinct audiences, in a tone that balanced scientific authority with accessible ambition. A particular challenge was reconciling the founding body's philanthropic priorities, including its emphasis on global health equity, with the venture's commercial positioning.

“The clear and present challenge is to revolutionize the field so that it moves at a speed that's already attainable. More than that, to see it gather increasing pace, generating powerful momentum along the way.”

03 Tagline Development & Strategic Commentary

Each tagline candidate came with strategic commentary on its semantic mechanics, tonal implications, audience resonance, and potential vulnerabilities. This included analysis of verb tense (present continuous, to convey ongoing momentum), connotative range (so that the lines implied ambition without overpromising), and audience-specific appeal. The commentary also set out how different taglines could be deployed across channels and stakeholder touchpoints, rather than locking the brand to a single option.

STRATEGIC DEPTH

Copy with Its Reasoning Attached

Every piece of copy in this engagement came with commentary explaining its rationale: why a particular word was chosen, how a phrase would land with different audiences, what risks a given formulation carried, and how it related to the broader messaging architecture. That allowed the founding team to make informed decisions rather than approving or rejecting copy on instinct.

CONTENT STRATEGY

I scoped and planned a content strategy engagement across four phases: Discovery & Foundation, Core Content Development, Visual Strategy & Presentation, and Tagline Development & Finalisation. The strategy document included hour estimates per deliverable, dependency mapping, stakeholder review cadences, and the variables that could compress or extend the timeline, giving the founding team a clear roadmap for bringing the brand to market.

MESSAGING ARCHITECTURE

The messaging architecture provided language frameworks for four stakeholder groups, each with different priorities, knowledge levels, and decision-making criteria. A university researcher cares about intellectual freedom and data quality; a biotech R&D director about pipeline acceleration and de-risking; a grant agency about rigour and accountability; an AI recruit about mission and technical challenge. The framework kept one brand voice across all four registers.

OUTCOMES

01 Brand identity adopted in full

The brand name, mission statement, and tagline framework I developed were adopted by the venture as its public-facing identity. The naming rationale proved instrumental in securing stakeholder alignment across a complex governance structure.

02 Strategic clarity for a multi-audience venture

The messaging architecture gave the founding team a reliable framework for communicating with four distinct audiences without diluting or contradicting the core brand.

03 Operational content roadmap

The content strategy plan provided a clear, costed path from brand creation to sustained market presence, covering narrative development, visual strategy, and stakeholder engagement.

04 Intellectual property that compounds

The deliverables were designed as living strategic assets: messaging frameworks, brand guidelines, and narrative architectures that could evolve with the venture.

This project has been anonymised to respect client confidentiality. All strategic reasoning, deliverable descriptions, and process details are accurate representations of the work performed. Specific company names, proprietary technology names, and identifying details have been altered.