The 2035 Inflection Point

by Dr Raymond Uzwyshyn

The real story isn't about today's AI tools it's about the race toward Artificial Superintelligence (ASI). Infrastructure decisions being made now will determine who controls geopolitical advantage by 2035. More critically, AI will fundamentally restructure how humans learn, labour, and create value. In this transitionary period, between 2025-2035, the Middle East has an opportunity to position itself as a strategic "AI Interzone" where regulatory flexibility meets technological possibility and economic prosperity.

Infrastructure Determines AI

The conventional AI narrative focuses on breakthroughs - large models, better architectures, novel training approaches. This overlooks fundamental constraints: by 2035, whoever controls infrastructure will command ASI development. This infrastructure encompasses four critical components: energy, computing capacity, water, and human intelligence.

Current AI training demands extraordinary energy. The International Energy Agency projects data centre electricity consumption could double between 2023 and 2026, reaching 1,000 terawatt-hours annually - equivalent to Japan's total consumption. As we approach ASI-capable systems, single training runs could require terawatt-hours of energy. Nations with abundant, affordable energy dedicated to AI development will lead this race.

Computing capacity follows similar logic. Microsoft and OpenAI's reported $100 billion *"Stargate"* supercomputer project illustrates the scale required. By 2035, facilities training ASI systems and serving inference demand will dwarf today's data centres. Geographic factors, cooling requirements, fibre connectivity, physical security, regulatory environment, all constrain placement possibilities.

Insight: The 2025-2028 period is critical. Leaders who treat AI infrastructure as strategic assets -like oil refineries or semiconductor fabs - will capture outsized value.

Education Disruption: From Knowledge To AI Workers

By 2035, educating *"AI leaders"* proficient in orchestrating AI systems will replace retraining knowledge workers. Early AI literacy will be essential, beginning with computational thinking in preschool to develop intuitive understanding - not just coding skills - supported by research showing children as young as seven can grasp AI concepts.

Pedagogy shifts from theory-first to practical learning, as exemplified by Andrej Karpathy's approach to understanding AI through code experimentation. AI-assisted coding allows practitioners to succeed without deep theoretical knowledge, reflecting an evolutionary adaptation.

AI worker value derives from interdisciplinary synthesis, blending creativity, expertise, and AI orchestration. Medical professionals will need to understand AI diagnostic tools intimately; urban planners will integrate AI-driven models across multiple domains.

Economics Of AI Worker Value

Traditional value from proprietary expertise will erode. By 2035, the key skills include:

- Judging when to trust or override AI
- Framing novel problems for AI assistance
- Applying ethical and cultural context
- Managing multiple AI systems
- Anticipating AI manipulation risks

Geopolitical Positioning: Middle East As AI Interzone

With the global order shifting, the Middle East, especially the Gulf, can create an *"AI Interzone"* blending innovation-friendly regulations with governance to attract global capital. Regulatory arbitrage arises as AI laws diverge - EU's strict AI Act, China's state control, and US regulatory fragmentation create openings.

Key success factors include:
- Flexible data governance
- Balanced ethical frameworks
- Intellectual property regimes enabling rapid innovation
- international collaboration free from security constraints
- World-class research institutions rivalling Stanford and MIT
- Attractive living standards to draw top talent

Infrastructure like education cities and research parks signal awareness; 2035 success comes from fostering a research class that produces breakthroughs.

Actionable Framework

Educational Institutions: Integrate AI literacy, embrace pragmatic pedagogy prioritizing experimentation, cultivate interdisciplinary synthesis, and develop curricula for decision-making under algorithmic uncertainty.

Regional Leadership: Prioritize infrastructure over algorithms as strategic assets, calibrate regulatory positions enabling research impeded elsewhere, invest in talent magnetism and collaboration bridges where geopolitical tensions don't impede research.

Business Leaders: Retrain workforces for judgment and orchestration roles creating value today and cultivate regulatory intelligence anticipating arbitrage opportunities.

Conclusion: The 2035 Window Opens Now

The AI transformation toward 2035 is shaped by today's decisions. Infrastructure, education, business foresight, and regulation - not just algorithms - determine who leads ASI development. Leaders acting decisively between 2025 and 2028 will shape the future; others will fall behind.

The future is now. The question: Who will seize the opportunity to prepare for ASI by 2035?

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Raymond Uzwyshyn, Ph.D., MBA, MLIS, serves as Director of Research and Technology at the University of California, Riverside. His work focuses on emerging technologies, education transformation, research libraries and strategic institutional positioning for the AI era. He may be reached for presentations and consultative work. Vita: https://rayuzwyshyn.net