BROOKINGS

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

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Brookings equips
decisionmakers with
nonpartisan research and
policy strategies to create
a more prosperous and
secure country and world.



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CO-CHAIRS' LETTER



Glenn H. Hutchins
Co-Chair of the Board



Suzanne Nora Johnson
Co-Chair of the Board

In a year marked by geopolitical uncertainty, rapid technological change, and economic and market volatility, the Brookings Institution has reaffirmed its defining purpose: to advance high-quality, evidence-based research that strengthens public policy and improves lives.

In 2025, Brookings scholars produced influential work across a wide range of critical issues—from economic growth, fiscal stability, and global security to democratic governance and the future of work. Our research shaped legislative debates, informed executive-branch decisionmaking in an AI world, guided philanthropic and private-sector strategy, and elevated public understanding of complex policy challenges. At a time when facts are too often contested, Brookings has remained steadfast in its commitment to rigorous analysis, intellectual honesty, and real-world impact.

We are proud not only of the quality of this work, but of the role Brookings plays in the broader civic ecosystem: convening a broad range of opinion, bridging divides, and offering pragmatic solutions to problems that matter. Our institution's credibility rests on its independence, methodological rigor, and refusal to subordinate evidence to ideology—and that credibility has never been more essential.

We believe Brookings has an opportunity—and a responsibility—to evolve for a new era. In the coming years, we will identify innovative ways to pursue the best ideas. Our guiding principle is simple and demanding: we will champion solutions that work, grounded in data, tested by reason, and oriented toward measurable public benefit.

We also intend to embrace powerful tools to advance our mission. Artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies offer unprecedented opportunities to accelerate research, deepen analysis, and expand the reach and accessibility of Brookings insights. Used responsibly, these tools can strengthen both the rigor of our scholarship and the effectiveness with which we communicate it to policymakers, practitioners, and the public.

Brookings' impact has always rested on the strength of its people: its scholars, staff, board, partners, and supporters. We are deeply grateful to all who contribute to this institution's vitality and independence. Together, we will ensure that Brookings remains not only a leading think tank, but a trusted source of truth, insight, and constructive problem-solving in an increasingly complex world.

We are proud of what Brookings accomplished in 2025—and even more galvanized about what lies ahead.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Cecilia Elena Rouse
President

When Brookings was founded in 1916, the United States faced crises on a number of fronts: a raging war in Europe, stark income inequality, vigorous debate over voting rights, rising anti-immigrant sentiment, and vast expansion of the role of the federal government in ways many disagreed with. Against this backdrop, Brookings was created to enhance the government's capacity to solve problems through improved public policy informed by rigorous research.

Over 100 years later, the landscape is similarly fraught, but the environment we are working in has evolved. Where a narrow set of media outlets—network television and a handful of major newspapers—once drove the national conversation, information now comes from increasingly partisan sources proliferating across cable television, social media, podcasts, and other platforms. And so, while the need for innovative, thoughtful policy solutions is greater than ever, successful impact requires a deep understanding of how decisionmakers in local, state, and federal government, the private sector, and civil society consume information.

In response, Brookings is committed to being a modern, world-class nexus of policy insights and solutions that leverages our expertise to bring together coalitions of organizations and leaders to address complex policy challenges. We do so by using sophisticated analytics and new technologies, including AI, to gain insights into not just our reach, but where that reach is translating into impact. These efforts are guided by the understanding that Brookings research is not an output, but rather an input to improved public policy. This is our strategic North Star.

We follow this North Star in pursuit of our mission to equip decisionmakers with nonpartisan research and policy strategies to create a more prosperous and secure country and world. This is an exciting time at Brookings, and there is nowhere I would rather be than leading this Institution.

Democracy & U.S. Government Reform

In a year marked by political shifts, Brookings experts provided research and analysis on presidential succession, government reform, and policy changes. Through congressional testimony, reports, and real-time trackers, Brookings provided policy guidance and advanced solutions.



Members of the House Freedom Caucus speak to reporters about the One Big Beautiful Bill Act reconciliation package.

Informing the debate on the 2025 reconciliation bill

As Congress advanced the reconciliation package—the One Big Beautiful Bill Act—the Economic Studies program compiled existing research and released new commentary examining the bill's wide-ranging implications. On tax policy, Brookings experts highlighted how proposed changes—such as extending Section 199A, expanding health savings accounts, and altering corporate tax provisions—would skew benefits toward higher earners while undermining prior reforms. Additional work explained how the bill's child tax credit design could leave out low-income families and how its charitable giving provisions could reduce nonprofit donations. Through timely publications and explainers, Brookings scholars helped frame key trade-offs facing lawmakers—offering evidence-based insights that shaped the policy conversation across budget, health, and social safety net debates.



Guiding the nation through a political first

While speculation about President Joe Biden's candidacy grew in summer 2024, Senior Fellow Elaine Kamarck was a leading voice on how political parties handle the withdrawal of a presidential nominee. Her expertise became even more sought after when Biden officially exited the race. Kamarck contributed several Brookings "FixGov" blog posts that were widely cited by the media and gave numerous interviews breaking down potential scenarios. She appeared frequently on CNN and spoke with The Wall Street Journal, offering insight into the procedural mechanisms for replacing President Biden as the Democratic nominee.

Advising on federal disaster policy reforms

Fellow Manann Donoghoe met with legislative staff on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, led by Representative Sam Graves (R-Mo.), in May 2025. The Committee has jurisdiction over disaster management and response. Donoghoe discussed potential policy actions that could improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and coverage of the disaster management system, including state responsibilities and the process for disaster declarations.



Hurricane Helene damage in North Carolina

Shaping the national discourse on the One Big Beautiful Bill Act's impact on nutritional assistance benefits

Fellow Farah Khan was quoted by KFF Health News in an article about Medicaid work requirements and how few state programs help enrollees find jobs. Nearly 150 different news outlets syndicated the article in advance of the passage of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, which substantially cut federal spending on Medicaid. The interview was informed by Khan's March 2025 Brookings piece on the lack of evidence that Medicaid or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) work requirements increase employment. Rather, she found that such requirements often strip essential benefits from society's most vulnerable, while also adding bureaucratic barriers that disproportionately harm those already struggling.



Senior Fellow Adie Tomer

Testifying on Capitol Hill on enabling investments in America's transportation infrastructure

Senior Fellow Adie Tomer testified at a U.S. House Subcommittee on Highways and Transit hearing in April 2025. Tomer affirmed the essential role of the Highway Trust Fund in enabling long-term, stable investments in America's transportation infrastructure, from state highways to local roads. The Highway Trust Fund is one of the most powerful fiscal instruments in the federal government's investment toolbox, but revenues have failed to keep up with outlays for over two decades.

Brookings turns knowledge into progress, transforming evidence into solutions that endure.



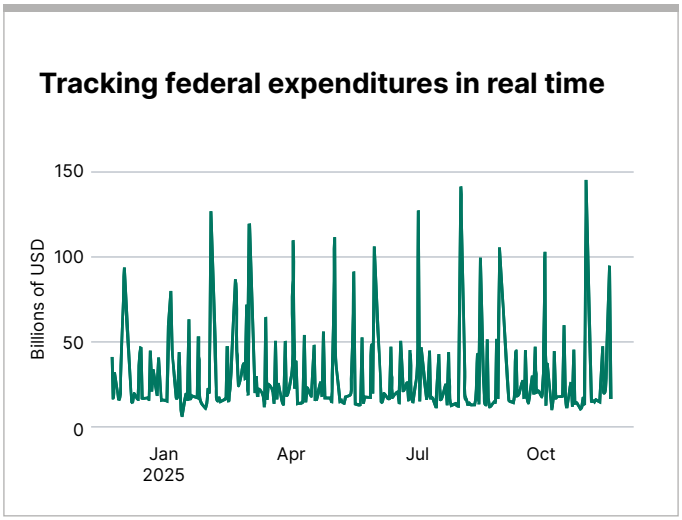


Revealing the long-term costs of cutting health safety net programs

As Congress debated the sweeping reconciliation bill in 2025, Center on Health Policy scholars produced a series of analyses detailing the broad and lasting harms of proposed cuts to Medicaid and other health safety net programs. A May 2025 Washington Post opinion piece by Fellow Loren Adler and Senior Fellow Matthew Fiedler warned that millions could lose coverage under the new provisions. Nonresident Senior Fellow Sherry Glied and New York University Associate Research Scientist Dong Ding examined how new work requirements would likely reduce coverage without generating meaningful savings, disproportionately affecting low-income adults. Nonresident Senior Fellow Thomas Buchmueller and University of Michigan Professor Helen Levy detailed the human costs of Medicaid disinvestment, and Visiting Fellow Christen Linke Young examined comparisons to Affordable Care Act repeals in 2017. Brookings analysis of Congressional Budget Office scores contextualized the bill's projected coverage losses and fiscal impact. By elevating the consequences of Medicaid cuts, Brookings scholars helped frame the debate around the long-term risks to health and economic stability.

Building tools for transparency in a time of fiscal and regulatory uncertainty

Brookings launched a series of real-time trackers to inform policymakers, researchers, and the public about administrative and regulatory shifts made by the Trump administration. A federal spending tracker by The Hamilton Project visualizes daily disbursements from the U.S. Treasury, helping illuminate a sudden stop in United States Agency for International Development payments following a spending freeze announced by the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). The tracker was proactively shared with members of Congress and staff, as well as other nonprofits and organizations focused on fiscal accountability. Other Hamilton Project tools capture fluctuations in trade patterns in response to abrupt tariff policy shifts and reveal processing slowdowns in immigrant work permits despite unchanged eligibility criteria. The Center on Regulation and Markets' regulation tracker follows regulatory actions that bypass traditional notice-and-comment procedures. These tools are updated frequently to monitor fast-moving developments across key policy areas—federal expenditures, trade, immigration, and regulatory governance—providing timely insight into opaque decisionmaking processes.



The Hamilton Project's federal spending tracker illustrates disbursements by the U.S. Treasury.



FCAI—Informing the AI Action Plan

The work of the Forum for Cooperation on Artificial Intelligence (FCAI) was highlighted in a February 2025 article in Forbes. The scholars who led FCAI, Distinguished Visiting Fellow Cameron F. Kerry and Senior Fellow Josh Meltzer, also submitted recommendations for the Trump administration's AI Action Plan. The recommendations were reflected in the updated White House Office of Management and Budget memos on government procurement of AI.



USAID signage is covered at the agency's headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Understanding USAID dismantling

Center for Sustainable Development Senior Fellow George Ingram, a trusted expert on U.S. foreign aid, provided authoritative analysis during USAID restructuring in early 2025. In The Wall Street Journal, Ingram underscored that the Foreign Operations Appropriations Act prohibits reorganization without congressional approval; in The Washington Post, he detailed the economic impact on U.S. businesses; and on NPR, he contextualized the move in the longstanding history of scrutiny USAID has faced. His insights informed both public discourse and congressional understanding at a critical moment for U.S. development policy.

Tracking the impact of DOGE

Since the launch of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), Senior Fellow Elaine Kamarck has closely tracked its actions and impact. A leading expert in government reform, she has analyzed each DOGE initiative, evaluating both its intended goals and actual consequences. She shared her analysis in many high-profile media appearances, such as during a March 2025 special on CBS's "Sunday Morning" and on NPR's Planet Money podcast. Her writing—featured in "FixGov" blog posts and detailed policy reports—has become an important source for the press. She has examined how DOGE cuts affect essential public services, including Federal Emergency Management Agency services and Social Security, raising important questions about the long-term effects of government downsizing. Thomas A. Schatz, president of Citizens Against Government Waste, referenced her analysis during a February 2025 House Oversight hearing on "Rightsizing Government." At the June 2025 "Locking in the DOGE Cuts" hearing, Representative Jasmine Crockett (D-Texas) cited her article "How will we know if DOGE is succeeding?" and entered it into the record. Kamarck's work was also cited by Senator Richard Blumenthal and the minority staff of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations in their July 2025 report, "The $21.7 Billion Blunder: Analyzing the Waste Generated by DOGE."



Senior Fellow Elaine Kamarck

U.S. Economy

During a period of policy transition, Brookings advanced economic insights on topics such as fiscal risk, financial transparency, workforce resilience, retirement security, and student aid reform. Through rigorous research, public events, and congressional engagement, Brookings scholars continue to inform national policy debates.



Reframing the debate on rising federal debt

With federal debt at historic highs, Brookings experts are reshaping public understanding of long-term fiscal risk. Joint research launched by the Hutchins Center on Fiscal and Monetary Policy and The Hamilton Project examined the economic consequences of sustained debt growth. Former Council of Economic Advisers Chair Jason Furman and former Federal Reserve Vice Chair Richard Clarida took part in a panel discussion at an event launching the paper in February 2025. This research was featured in Bloomberg's "Balance of Power" newsletter, which highlighted the study's findings on why a U.S. debt crisis is unlikely in the near term and how rising debt is likely to erode long-term economic growth.

Reassessing the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017

As Congress revisited the provisions of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (TCJA) ahead of their December 2025 expiration, policymakers faced critical questions about the law's long-term economic impact. The Urban-Brookings Tax Policy Center (TPC) produced a comprehensive body of research examining TCJA's effects on investment, growth, income distribution, and federal revenues. A key analysis by TPC co-director William Gale finds that while the law modestly increased business investment, it added substantially to the federal deficit and delivered disproportionate benefits to high-income households. To mark the legislation's sixth anniversary, TPC and the Hutchins Center on Fiscal and Monetary Policy hosted a public event in September 2024. The event featured experts and former Treasury officials who reflected on lessons learned and priorities for reform. The Centers' work underscored the need for more equitable and fiscally responsible tax policy, offering evidence-based insights to guide the national debate.

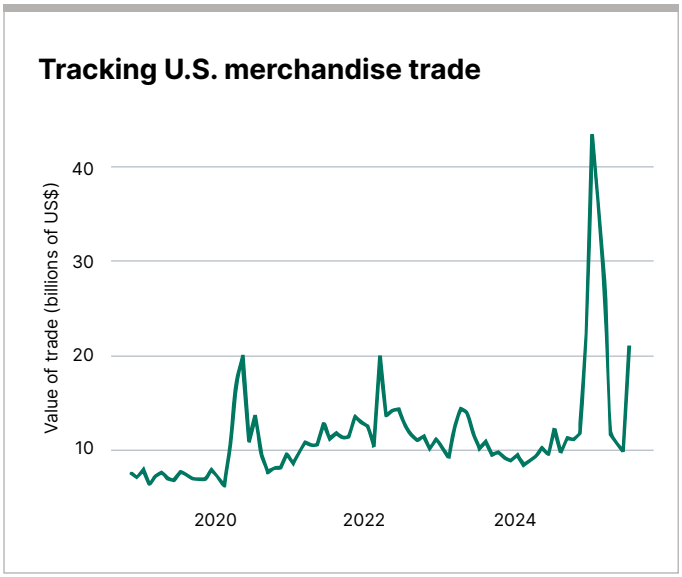


Highlighting the risks of tariffs amid ongoing drug shortages

Amid ongoing shortages of generic medications, Center on Health Policy (CHP) Senior Fellow Marta Wosińska published a series of analyses and an explainer video detailing how proposed pharmaceutical tariffs could raise prices and restrict availability of critical prescription drugs. Her work—featured in outlets including Politico's Prescription Pulse and Harvard Business Review—garnered attention from congressional staff and executive branch economists. Wosińska also spoke on the current state of drug shortages at the National Home Infusion Association's annual conference and at a webinar hosted by the End Drug Shortages Alliance. In spring 2025, Wosińska also briefed bipartisan staff from the U.S. House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party. That same April, CHP convened a discussion on the U.S. government's role in ensuring drug supply chain reliability. These efforts underscore the increasing reliance on Brookings expertise as policymakers navigate the tradeoffs between economic resilience and public health access.

Making economic sense of shifting tariff policies

As tariff policy shifted rapidly in 2025, Brookings scholars provided data-driven tools and timely analysis to help audiences understand the implications of those shifts. As early as October 2024, The Hamilton Project (THP) released commentary by Senior Fellow Wendy Edelberg and Peterson Institute for International Economics (PIIE) Senior Fellow Maurice Obstfeld detailing how tariffs would raise prices, disrupt supply chains, and trigger economic chaos. The same month, THP and PIIE hosted an event on the topic. In April 2025, the day after the administration's announcement of sweeping new reciprocal tariffs, Brookings convened experts to evaluate the legality, economic impact, and foreign policy risks of the administration's proposals. In July 2025, THP launched an interactive data visualization that tracks merchandise trade and tariffs by industry and country, giving users a real-time view of how restrictions are impacting the economy. Together, these efforts, analyses, and tools helped policymakers, businesses, and the public understand the real-time economic effects of the Trump administration's trade policy announcements.



The Hamilton Project launched an interactive data visualization to help understand how countries and businesses react to an ever-changing trade landscape.



Safeguarding Federal Reserve independence

In testimony and commentary, Brookings experts have examined the risks of political interference in the Federal Reserve. In October 2024, Hutchins Center on Fiscal and Monetary Policy Senior Fellow Donald Kohn wrote a guest essay in The New York Times that outlined the potential inflationary impacts of presidential interference with the Fed. In March 2025, he testified in the first hearing before the House Financial Services Committee's new Task Force on Monetary Policy on the importance of maintaining Federal Reserve independence. Along with co-author Mark Spindel, Senior Fellow Sarah Binder examined some of the guardrails for Fed independence in "Who will protect the Fed's independence? The markets" in Bloomberg and "Could the Supreme Court kill the Fed's independence?" in Good Authority. Hutchins Center Director David Wessel framed the issue in a May 2025 commentary "Why is the Federal Reserve independent and what does that mean in practice?" Janet Yellen and Ben Bernanke, both former Federal Reserve chairs now at Brookings, co-authored an opinion piece in The New York Times underscoring the importance of Fed independence.



Frankie Mansaray (left), a 2023 graduate of the CareerWise DC Apprentice program, moderates a fireside chat with Colorado Senator John Hickenlooper on congressional efforts to grow apprenticeship opportunities.

Helping the federal government create better career pathways

Fellow Annelies Goger's 2021 report about apprenticeships as an overlooked solution for accessing quality jobs continues to achieve policy impact. It was cited in a September 2024 issues brief, "Broadening Registered Apprenticeships Can Boost America's Workforce and Grow the Middle Class," from Democrats on the Joint Economic Committee. In July 2024, Goger informed staff of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions on methods to scale apprenticeships, including how to increase employer participation, improve data systems, and recognize learning.

Analyzing the future of student aid

Amid mounting legal and legislative challenges to the U.S. student aid system, Center for Economic Security and Opportunity scholars provided timely analysis to help navigate a rapidly shifting policy landscape. Senior Fellow Sarah Reber and University of Virginia Professor Sarah Turner examined the Saving on a Valuable Education (SAVE) income-driven repayment plan and outlined how legal challenges created borrower confusion and risked limiting access to affordable repayment options. During a May 2025 public event, Reber, Turner, and other experts assessed broader implications for repayment policy. Nonresident Senior Fellow Phillip Levine also analyzed how tuition strategies and endowment policies affect socioeconomic diversity at highly resourced institutions and highlighted how limited need-based financial aid and endowment taxes reduce access for low-income students. Together, this body of work underscored how legal rulings, federal funding debates, and institutional practices collectively shape the higher education landscape and the economic opportunity it provides.

Driving the global conversation on how generative AI impacts the U.S. workforce

Senior Fellow Molly Kinder's findings on how AI could impact white collar and early-career jobs have sparked engagement from policymakers, business leaders, and global institutions. She advised the World Business Council for Sustainable Development on responsible AI deployment, led a March 2024 session on AI and work at the Vatican, and served as a speaker at the Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose's May 2025 conference. Kinder's expertise has reached broad audiences: She was quoted in a May 2025 New York Times article on AI's disruption of entry-level jobs.



Senior Fellow Molly Kinder leads a session on AI and work at the Vatican.



Senior Fellow and Director of the Retirement Security Project Gopi Shah Goda

Improving policy outcomes for retirees and aging Americans

Despite gains from programs like Social Security and Medicare, millions of older adults in the United States, particularly those with low incomes, still face economic insecurity. In October 2024, Brookings re-launched the Retirement Security Project under the leadership of Director and Senior Fellow Gopi Shah Goda to produce rigorous analysis to help more Americans achieve a financially secure retirement. Recent work addresses the structural challenges facing Social Security, the implications of Medicaid changes for near-retirees, and the need to expand in-home care coverage under Medicare. In addition, the Center on Health Policy (CHP) published a series of policy research and proposals led by Visiting Fellow Wendell Primus. CHP explored targeted reforms to bolster federal support for older Americans including streamlining enrollment for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, lowering Medicare premiums for low-income beneficiaries, and modifying the interaction between Social Security and SSI.

America's Neighborhoods & Communities

Brookings scholars shaped national conversations and policy on inclusive economic development and community well-being through high-impact research, policy engagement, and bipartisan collaboration.



Senior Fellow and Director of Applied Research Joseph Parilla speaking at the final NIPIN convening in Syracuse, New York.

Aligning industrial strategy across regions

One of President Biden's final actions—his January 2025 "Executive Order on Helping Left-Behind Communities Make a Comeback"—reflects key policy priorities and needs that Senior Fellow Mark Muro and Senior Fellow and Director of Applied Research Joseph Parilla have documented and discussed as part of their New Industrial Policy Implementers Network (NIPIN). Biden's order aimed to increase and coordinate investments in left-behind places, including rural, Tribal, and economically distressed communities. June 2025 marked the culmination of NIPIN's two years of shared learning and experimentation among economic leaders in seven regions to translate federal investments into inclusive, long-term regional economic transformation. Local and national philanthropic leaders and federal policymakers attended the network's convenings. Senior Fellow Xavier de Souza Briggs shared learnings from the NIPIN at an August 2024 White House Summit on Capital Support for Place-Based Economic Development. The audience included senior administration officials, philanthropic leaders, and nonprofit stakeholders key to the implementation of place-based programs.

Shaping federal place-based economic development policy

The landmark CHIPS and Science Act, signed into law in 2022, was informed by research from Senior Fellow Mark Muro and Senior Fellow and Director of Applied Research Joseph Parilla. Since its passage, Muro, Parilla, and Senior Fellow Martha Ross have continued to advise the officials responsible for administering the program on how to maximize the reach and impact of semiconductor incentives in growing regional clusters and prosperous economies. In July 2024, senior policy leaders from the National Institute of Standards and Technology released their Regional Strategy, which included many of the terms, themes, and tactics that Brookings scholars shared in their research and private briefings. The strategy prioritized work with regions—initially focusing on places hosting large, leading-edge facilities—to accelerate the development of industry cluster growth.



Pittsburgh was found to be an emerging AI center in Senior Fellow Mark Muro's report on the AI economy.

Charting readiness to embrace AI across the country

In July 2025, Senior Fellow Mark Muro co-authored a report measuring U.S. regions' readiness to benefit from AI. The report has been cited in over 30 articles, including a front-page piece in the Los Angeles Times and a story in The Philadelphia Inquirer. The report has also been covered by news outlets in Pittsburgh, Boston, Seattle, Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, San Francisco, Miami, Washington, D.C., and Tampa Bay. Muro has been engaging with business and policy leaders about his research, including as a keynote speaker at a March 2025 Microsoft TechSpark Fellows Summit, and at a July 2024 fireside chat with former White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Director Arati Prabhakar.



President Joe Biden speaking at Brookings in December 2024

Reflecting on economic policy

On December 10, 2024, President Joe Biden came to Brookings to reflect on the economy during his presidency. In his 40-minute speech, Biden highlighted the CHIPS and Science Act and the Inflation Reduction Act—both of which were informed by the work of Brookings scholars—and shared key pages from his administration's middle-out, bottom-up economic playbook. Biden concluded his remarks by emphasizing the importance of respect in the face of partisan disagreements.



Fellow Tracy Hadden Loh, shown testifying before the U.S. Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, specializes in transformative placemaking.

Improving prosperity and safety in Washington, D.C.

In March 2025, Fellow Tracy Hadden Loh testified before the Council of the District of Columbia about strategies for Washington, D.C.'s future growth, investment, and stability. Loh's testimony explored how the decline of federal employment could impact property taxes, sales, and hospitality revenues in the city. She identified strategies the District can employ to support storefront businesses, whose well-being matters not just for their owners and employees, but also for the overall quality of their neighborhoods. In May 2025, the American Civil Liberties Union, Community Safety Working Group, and Vera Action held a moderated briefing on Capitol Hill that evaluated the community safety risk of federal funding cuts. During the event, Fellow Hanna Love spoke about the impacts of federal funding constraints on state and local community safety programs. Her remarks were informed by an April 2025 report on how "tough-on-crime" policies make cities less safe, both in Washington, D.C., and beyond.



Former North Dakota Senator Heidi Heitkamp (left) and former New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu are co-chairs of the Brookings-AEI Commission on U.S. Rural Prosperity.

Launching America's Rural Future

In July 2025, Brookings launched America's Rural Future: Brookings-AEI Commission on U.S. Rural Prosperity. This bipartisan initiative is co-chaired by former Republican Governor Chris Sununu of New Hampshire and former Democratic Senator Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota and is supported by Center for Sustainable Development Senior Fellow Tony Pipa and American Enterprise Institute (AEI) Senior Fellow Brent Orrell. The commission aims to develop pragmatic, long-term solutions that advance economic opportunity, resilience, and quality of life across rural America. Building on years of Reimagining Rural Policy research, the extensive bipartisan engagement and media coverage of the launch reflects a shared recognition that rural communities—home to nearly one in five Americans—remain too often overlooked in national policymaking, despite their vital contributions to the country's economic, cultural, and social fabric.

AMERICA'S RURAL FUTURE

Expanding Brookings' research on Native Americans

In November 2024, Fellow Robert Maxim and Research Associate and Applied Research Manager Glencora Haskins briefed staffers for Representative Mark Takano (D-Calif.) on the findings of their federal Indian Boarding Schools report. Rep. Takano's office sought their input on how to strengthen investment into the Bureau of Indian Education-run schools. Maxim is an enrolled citizen of the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe and an expert on the economic conditions and opportunities available to Native Americans and Indigenous communities.



Senior Fellow Vanda Felbab-Brown (left) and former Mayor of New York City Bill de Blasio discuss the synthetic opioid crisis.

Combating synthetic opioids

In December 2024, the Brookings Foreign Policy program published the results of a yearlong project on synthetic opioids in the United States and abroad, culminating in 12 papers on different aspects of the crisis. Highlighting the project's findings and featuring top experts, the launch event opened with a fireside chat between former New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and Senior Fellow Vanda Felbab-Brown, followed by conversations moderated by reporters from NPR, The Washington Post, and The New York Times. In addition, Felbab-Brown released a 13-episode podcast, "The Killing Drugs," that explores U.S. drugs markets, domestic law enforcement, treatment, harm reduction, and decriminalization policies, as well as the international dimensions of synthetic opioids and their spread beyond North America. Felbab-Brown's expertise on the fentanyl crisis has been in high demand from policymakers around the world. In July 2025, Felbab-Brown testified before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on dismantling transnational criminal organizations in the Americas.



Pilar Guzman, Jenny Anderson, Drew Barrymore, Senior Fellow Rebecca Winthrop, and Gayle King (from left) with Winthrop and Anderson's book, "The Disengaged Teen"

The kids are (going to be) all right

In January 2025, Senior Fellow and Director of the Center for Universal Education Rebecca Winthrop released "The Disengaged Teen: Helping Kids Learn Better, Feel Better, and Live Better." Co-authored with journalist Jenny Anderson, the book provides parents with tools to support their children's academic and emotional flourishing. Alongside this, Winthrop published a report detailing new findings on chronic absenteeism in schools. Winthrop and Anderson appeared on a number of local and national news programs, including MSNBC's "Morning Joe" and WGN-Chicago. The Global Economy and Development program itself hosted two events: The first, which was featured on C-SPAN, invited panelists to discuss the problem of chronic absenteeism; the second event officially launched the book with a fireside chat moderated by Jessica Grose of The New York Times.



Following the money in school choice

Recently, K–12 education has gone through sudden changes, including moves toward large-scale school choice programs that allow families to use public funds to pay for private school tuition and other expenses. The Brown Center on Education Policy has conducted several analyses of state-level programs and federal policy proposals of this kind. The Brown Center's work has shown that these policies tend to redirect school funding from lower-income families to higher-income families, and from rural areas to urban and suburban areas. Brookings' research stood out in policy debates and media coverage in multiple states, informing the design of state policies. It also featured prominently in congressional debates about how to design a federal tax-credit scholarship program, as well as state leaders' discussions of whether and how to participate in that federal program.

Global Development & Governance

Brookings played a leading role in global policy conversations on trade, climate finance, and sustainable development. New tools such as trade and tariff trackers provided real-time insights into shifting economic policies; international convenings advanced reform agendas on multilateral finance; and publications informed decisionmakers and highlighted Brookings' commitment to inclusive growth and global cooperation.



Prime Minister of Barbados Mia Mottley (left) and Senior Fellow Homi Kharas discuss fiscal reform and multilateral bank transformation in a fireside chat during the 2024 U.N. General Assembly Week.

Assessing the state of the Sustainable Development Goals at the United Nations

During U.N. General Assembly week in September 2024, Brookings Center for Sustainable Development Director John McArthur delivered a TED talk-style address at the Sustainable Development Goals Moment at the United Nations Economic and Social Council chamber. He also provided an update on the world's progress on the Goals. The presentation drew from insights of a Brookings working paper McArthur and Senior Fellow Homi Kharas published with Senior Research Analyst Odera Onyechi in July 2024. McArthur also moderated a session featuring Haitian Prime Minister Garry Conille. In addition, Kharas hosted fireside chats at the U.N. with Prime Ministers Andrew Holness (Jamaica) and Mia Mottley (Barbados) on fiscal reform and multilateral development bank transformation, earning Mottley's public praise for his intellectual leadership. Senior Fellow Tony Pipa moderated and emphasized localization and youth leadership at the annual American Leaders Advancing the SDGs, hosted with the United Nations Foundation.

Informing debate on climate finance

How to finance sustainable development remains a central question for policymakers. At COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, Senior Fellow Amar Bhattacharya co-launched a landmark report from the Independent High-Level Expert Group on Climate Finance, to which Senior Fellow Homi Kharas also contributed. The report estimated that developing countries will need at least $2 trillion of annual investments to meet climate targets and mapped out pathways to reach the needed target. The report received coverage in over 800 outlets—including the Financial Times, the Guardian, and Reuters, where Bhattacharya described the clean energy transition as "one of the most significant economic and industrial transformations in modern times." In the lead-up to the 2024 World Bank-IMF Annual Meetings, Bhattacharya moderated a conversation with Nonresident Senior Fellow Vera Songwe and Simon Stiell, executive director of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, at an event on meeting global climate finance challenges.

Improving public understanding of trade and tariffs

To help inform public understanding of the shifting U.S. trade policy landscape, Senior Fellow Josh Meltzer and Research Analyst Dozie Ezi-Ashi launched a trade and tariff tracker, updated weekly, that lays out a timeline of U.S. actions and reciprocal actions by other countries and tracks tariff rates over time. Meltzer released explainer videos on what tariffs are, their impact, and who pays and on the impact of imports on GDP. Along with Neena Shenai of the American Enterprise Institute, Meltzer co-authored a paper on how the Trump administration can use its reset of trade policy to push for a new global trade round.



Brookings Trustee Victor Dodig provides opening remarks at the launch of the USMCA Forward report.

Connecting trade policy and national security

In May 2025, Senior Fellow Josh Meltzer published a timely op-ed in The Hill warning that President Trump's sweeping tariffs were "shredding global trust" in U.S. treaty commitments and driving key allies closer to China. He drew direct connections between economic policy and national security and highlighted how imposing tariffs on close partners undermines U.S. defense alliances and devalues the credibility of U.S. treaty obligations. One day later, a congressional letter signed by the ranking members of the Senate Foreign Relations, Armed Services, and Intelligence Committees echoed these concerns. The letter cited the administration's tariffs as a threat to U.S. national security, warning they could violate NATO treaty provisions, strain weapons procurement alliances, and fracture U.S. leadership in global defense coordination.

Tracking the implementation and impact of the USMCA

The Brookings United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) initiative measures the effectiveness and implementation of the USMCA, as well as its impact on the policies and economies of the partner nations. In 2025, the initiative convened a series of private roundtables with stakeholders from the United States, Mexico, and Canada and welcomed a delegation from the Mexican Congress for a discussion of trade and migration. The initiative continued to update the USMCA Tracker with new data on goods, services, investment, jobs, and total trade among the three countries. As part of Brookings' congressional outreach, the tracker also includes new one-page summaries of key trade and jobs data for every state and province across North America.



As the United States, Mexico, and Canada prepare for the 2026 review of the USMCA, the USMCA Forward 2025 flagship report identifies areas where strengthening U.S. cooperation with Canada and Mexico can advance key economic and national security goals for the United States—and where USMCA reform can help.

Centering youth voice and agency

In April 2025, the Center for Universal Education hosted its annual symposium on education systems transformation. This event, centered around youth agency, was a critical part of the Center's broader work on youth agency and student engagement and provided an opportunity for the Center and its partners to share learnings and approaches around the "what" and "how" of engaging youth agency in research and policy systems transformation practices. The Center invited Theirworld Global Youth Ambassador Blessing Ahmodu and Chair of the Youth Democracy Movement Henry Wright as featured speakers and highlighted local D.C. students as they led interactive activities and created social media content. More than 110 people attended in person and participated in the day's workshops and activities, and over 800 have watched online. The Center built on this event and work throughout the year through the publication of the results of two years of collaborative research with girls in marginalized communities, as well as several commentaries discussing the outcomes of the event, with the ultimate goal of advancing the cause of youth agency in research and education.



Director of the Center for Universal Education Rebecca Winthrop leads a session at the Center's Annual Symposium on Education Systems Transformation.



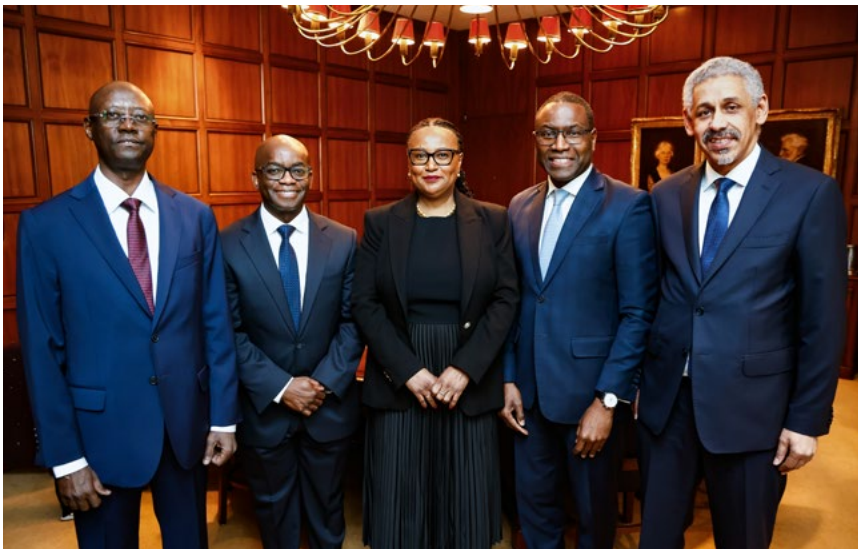
On the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly, Brookings convened high-level experts to discuss key questions about the future of multilateralism.

Strengthening global cooperation and the future of multilateralism

Throughout the 2024 United Nations General Assembly week, scholars from the Global Economy and Development program served as trusted voices in high-level international forums, contributing significantly to discussions on multilateralism and the strengthening of international financial systems. Their expertise positioned Brookings at the center of multiple critical conversations with leading experts on global finance and development, heads of state, and senior U.N. officials. Vice President and Director of Global Economy and Development Brahima S. Coulibaly led a discussion with high-level experts, including Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz, on the future of multilateralism with a focus on the impact of the next U.S. administration on global governance.

Advancing global financing reform at FfD4

At the U.N.-led Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) held in summer 2025, the Center for Sustainable Development showcased its long-term research and convening power in shaping global financing reform. Senior Fellows Caren Grown, Amar Bhattacharya, Homi Kharas, and John McArthur, and Nonresident Senior Fellow Mahmoud Mohieldin convened senior officials and U.N. commissioners to discuss fiscal space and sovereign debt sustainability. Grown delivered gender finance keynotes and moderated an infrastructure financing panel. Kharas, drawing on decades of research, framed four priorities for success at Sevilla, Spain. These contributions informed over 130 initiatives under the Sevilla Commitment, a roadmap to close the $4 trillion Sustainable Development Goals financing gap.



Candidates for the presidency of the African Development Bank (from left) Abbas Mahamat Tolli (Chad), Samuel Maimbo (Zambia), Swazi Thsabalala (South Africa), Amadou Hott (Senegal), and Sidi Ould Tah (Mauritania)

Shaping the future of Africa: The next president of the African Development Bank

The African Development Bank (AfDB) is a key driver of Africa's transformation as the continent navigates a unique set of development opportunities and challenges. The election of a new AfDB president in 2025 presented a defining moment for the strategic vision and priorities of the Bank's new leadership to shape the future of the continent. In April 2025, the Global Economy and Development program convened a high-level conversation with all five AfDB presidential candidates. Each candidate outlined their vision for the bank's evolving role, policy priorities, and strategic direction in a conversation moderated by Vice President and Director of Global Economy and Development Brahima S. Coulibaly.

Foresight Africa 2025: Top priorities for the continent

The Africa Growth Initiative's annual flagship report, "Foresight Africa," highlights key trends likely to impact Africa over the next year. Through research and analysis, the report seeks to draw the attention of policymakers to critical issues and opportunities facing the continent. The 2025 special issue of "Foresight Africa" contained contributions from the African Development Bank's then-president, Akinwumi Adesina, World Trade Organization Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, African Export-Import Bank President Benedict Okey Oramah, and many more. During events and private meetings, the report was distributed to several high-level stakeholders, including legislators and cabinet ministers from Botswana, Namibia, Kenya, and Côte D'Ivoire, and to Sidi Ould Tah, the newly elected president of the African Development Bank. Many of these representatives expressed their appreciation for the insights in this report and their usefulness in shaping their decisionmaking.

Realizing Africa's Potential

Senior Fellow Landry Signé's new book, "Realizing Africa's Potential," launched alongside the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, has attracted high-level attention. The book was prominently cited in a press release announcing the introduction of the African Diaspora Investment and Development Act by Representative Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick (D-Fla.). Signé was also invited by the president of the United Nations Economic and Social Council to deliver policy insights from the book at the U.N. High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. In Washington, D.C., he shared additional guidance with ambassadors and members of the African Union Diplomatic Corps on advancing U.S.-Africa engagement and conducted high-level briefings with congressional staff, including those advising the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa.

Advancing disability-inclusive development

In April 2025, Fellow Emily Markovich Morris traveled to Berlin to participate in the Global Disability Summit, a gathering of over 4,500 advocates, researchers, governments, community organizations, and businesses from around the world with the common goal of advancing the education, health care, employment, and well-being of people with disabilities. Hosted by the International Disability Alliance and the governments of Germany and Jordan, the triennial summit serves as a key platform for making progress in disability-inclusive development. At the summit, Morris participated in a panel launching the Special Olympics' Global Research Collaborative agenda. This agenda was developed in collaboration with colleagues from over 15 countries and commits to the principle of "with, not for" people with intellectual disabilities, particularly in the Global South and with displaced communities.

Geopolitical Challenges

Amid deepening tensions across the globe, Brookings scholars provided groundbreaking expert analysis and strategic policy recommendations on geopolitical dynamics. Brookings continues to be at the forefront of improving understanding of world events and their implications through long-form research, timely commentary, high-level convenings, and engagement with world leaders and policymakers.



MIDDLE EAST

Addressing rising tensions between Israel and Iran

Brookings scholars played a prominent role in analyzing the rising tensions between Israel and Iran that culminated in the June 2025 Israeli and American strikes on Iran's nuclear program and military command. Vice President and Director of Foreign Policy Suzanne Maloney anticipated the Iran-Israel war in a January 2025 Foreign Affairs essay and forecasted the aftermath in a follow-up article in the September 2025 issue.

As the conflict unfolded, Brookings scholars helped inform policymakers and the public through extensive analysis and media engagement. Philip Gordon, who rejoined Brookings after multiple senior stints in the State Department, White House, and Office of the Vice President, offered proposals for the Trump administration's diplomacy with Iran in a Foreign Affairs interview and related op-eds in The New York Times and the Financial Times. Gordon also was interviewed about the war by the Financial Times' Gideon Rachman on the podcast "The Rachman Review." On a June 2025 episode of "The Current" podcast, Visiting Fellow Mara Karlin drew from her long experience as a senior Pentagon official in assessing U.S. involvement in the Israel-Iran conflict, and what might come next. And in The Atlantic, Senior Fellow Thomas Wright analyzed President Trump's ceasefire declaration following the crisis.

Foreign Policy brought together a panel to weigh in on the war in an event titled Israel and Iran at war, which featured Distinguished Fellow and former Israeli Ambassador to the U.S. Itamar Rabinovich and former Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs Jeffrey Feltman, alongside Gordon and Maloney. The discussion was moderated by Nahal Toosi, Politico's senior foreign affairs correspondent.

Examining the Israel-Gaza conflict

Throughout the Israel-Gaza conflict, Brookings has remained actively engaged in analyzing and advancing solutions, hosting roundtables with senior White House and State Department officials, and publishing recommendations on pathways to ending the war. Foreign Policy experts offered a comparative perspective on governance failures, development, and human security across the region as part of a project conducted in partnership with the Japan International Cooperation Agency that produced essays on Gaza's reconstruction, the war in Yemen, and Libya.



Navigating Syria's new administration

With the December 2024 collapse of the Bashar Al Assad regime in Syria after more than a decade of civil war, Brookings scholars provided key insights and recommendations for U.S. policy. In a Brookings policy brief and in recommendations conveyed privately to the incoming Trump administration, Nonresident Senior Fellow Steven Heydemann advocated for sanctions relief to stabilize the new government in Damascus, ideas that President Trump swiftly implemented. And Fellow Aslı Aydıntaşbaş, director of Brookings' Turkey Project, led a virtual exchange with counterparts at Israel's Institute of National Security Studies aimed at managing frictions between Israel and Turkey in post-Assad Syria.

Engaging with senior policymakers

Visiting Fellow Mara Karlin testified before the House Armed Services Committee in February 2025 on how the United States should handle the multiple threats to global security and prevail in an era of comprehensive conflict. Senior Fellow Tanvi Madan was frequently consulted by White House officials on U.S. policy toward India. Her analysis of the U.S. efforts to de-escalate the May 2025 conflict between India and Pakistan was published in The Economist. Senior Fellow Bruce Jones was invited to brainstorm with senior Department of Defense officials as well as U.S. partners on naval and maritime challenges, and Fellow Alexander Noyes advised Pentagon and State Department officials on security cooperation and irregular warfare.



Senior Fellow Michael O'Hanlon, director of the Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology

Exploring pressing security challenges at the Knight Forum on Geopolitics

Ongoing wars in Ukraine and Gaza and rising tensions in the Indo-Pacific reflect the enduring relevance of military power. Yet, transnational challenges like climate change, food insecurity, and the disruptive potential of artificial intelligence and disinformation are no longer peripheral concerns. The 2024 Knight Forum on Geopolitics, held in October, explored big ideas and advanced innovative solutions to the world's wide-ranging security challenges. Hosted by Senior Fellow and Director of the Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology Michael O'Hanlon, the Forum examined the United States' dual imperative: responding to immediate military challenges and managing the nontraditional risks that are redefining global security. The 2024 Knight Forum featured keynote discussions with White House Office of Science and Technology Policy Director Arati Prabhakar and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph F. Dunford.



Minister of Treasury and Finance of the Republic of Turkey Mehmet Şimşek provides an update on his country's economy.

Reimagining relations with Turkey

As Ankara, Turkey, settled into an increasingly assertive and pivotal role between Russia, the Middle East, and Europe, Fellow Aslı Aydıntaşbaş launched the ReThink Turkey Project. She also spearheaded a series of essays, "Solving the Turkey conundrum," aimed at reenergizing the Turkey debate in Washington and offering guidance for the Trump administration. Written by leading Turkey scholars, the essays present a diverse array of policy options.



Understanding Europe's energy transition

In partnership with the Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos, Brookings launched a new project, "Europe's energy transition: Balancing the trilemma." The project features six papers that examine the future of Europe's energy security in a time of conflict. To kick off the project, Senior Fellow Constanze Stelzenmüller, director of the Center on the United States and Europe, and Fellow Samantha Gross, director of the Energy Security and Climate Initiative, co-authored a major report, "Europe's messy Russian gas divorce." In March 2025, Gross and Mark Finley, a nonresident fellow with the Baker Institute at Rice University, published the second report in the series, which offers ideas for navigating the energy transition at a time of political uncertainty. In 2024, Gross launched season two of her podcast, "Climate Sense," where she talks with experts to bring sense to the climate debate. Through nine episodes, the podcast explores the transition to a zero-carbon energy system.

Advancing long-form research with ground-breaking books

As part of Brookings' commitment to rigorous, fact-based, long-form research and analysis, Foreign Policy scholars published multiple influential books this year. In "Landing the Paris Climate Agreement," Nonresident Senior Fellow Todd Stern reviewed his part in making the historic climate deal happen. Nonresident Fellow Jaganath Sankaran examined the proliferation of aerospace weapons in "Bombing to Provoke." Visiting Fellow Joshua Rovner's "Strategy and Grand Strategy" analyzed military strategy from antiquity to today. Senior Fellow Melanie Sisson's "The United States, China, and the Competition for Control" asked how the United States and China differ in their visions of world order. Meanwhile, in "Libya Since Qaddafi," Nonresident Senior Fellow Stephanie T. Williams drew on her experience as a United Nations mediator to provide a first-hand examination of post-Qaddafi Libya. And in "Great Power Competition and Overseas Bases," Senior Fellow Andrew Yeo and Isaac Kardon of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace explored Chinese, Russian, and American force posture overseas. Senior Fellow Robert Kagan's latest book, "Rebellion: How Antiliberalism Is Tearing America Apart—Again," offered a chilling and clear-eyed warning about the threats to American democracy.



U.S.-CHINA RELATIONS

Understanding Chinese leadership and policies

Fellow Patricia M. Kim and Senior Fellow Ryan Hass, director of the John L. Thornton China Center, continued their research for the third phase of the Global China project, which examines a set of foundational questions about the U.S.-China relationship. The paper series "Lost in translation: Decoding Chinese strategic narratives" explores key strategic concepts, popular theories, and prevalent debates in the Chinese political system and discusses their implications for U.S. policy. Fellow Jon Czin published highly acclaimed analyses of Chinese President Xi Jinping's leadership and his approach to the economy, as well as deeply researched work on China's military and U.S. trade negotiations with China.

Seeing Chinese perspectives on U.S. relations first-hand

In April 2025, Brookings held its first China Study Tour since 2018. The trip included a series of high-level engagements in Beijing, Shanghai, and Hangzhou, as well as the 12th round of the Track II Dialogue on the Future of U.S.-China Relations in Sanya, Hainan. The delegation's time in China coincided with President Trump's "Liberation Day" announcement of global tariffs and escalatory responses by Beijing and Washington, giving the group the opportunity to engage with U.S. diplomats and the American business community in China, along with a wide range of Chinese government officials and private sector and civil society leaders, at a critical time in the relationship.

Engaging in U.S.-China dialogue

The John L. Thornton China Center and the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations gathered in November 2024 in Mexico to conduct the 11th round of dialogues. Talks examined how China and the United States interpret each other's national conditions, probed each side's expectations for the future of the relationship, and explored how both sides evaluate the global order. In September 2024, the China Center launched the Jeffrey A. Bader Memorial Lecture, which brings renowned speakers to Brookings to foster candid conversations among participants, inform policy debates, and educate the public. The inaugural lecture featured a fireside chat on lessons in leadership with former U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice that was moderated by China Center Director Ryan Hass.



Representatives John Moolenar (R-Mich.) and Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-Ill.), chair and ranking member, respectively, of the House Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party, join Fellow Patricia Kim (from left) for a fireside chat on Congress' approach to U.S.-China relations.

Advancing recommendations for U.S.-China diplomacy

A new series, "The future of U.S.-China policy," provided actionable policy recommendations to the new administration via 14 rigorously researched papers, including on Taiwan, China-Russia relations, diplomatic competition, defense, clean energy and technology, and overcapacity and derisking.



THE INDO-PACIFIC

Assessing security developments in the Indo-Pacific

The Indo-Pacific is a critical battleground of U.S.-China competition—the U.S. Department of Defense has described it as its "priority theater"—and home to some of the world's most vital trade routes. In November 2024, Fellow Lynn Kuok joined Senior Fellow Michael O'Hanlon to moderate a conversation with Commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Admiral Samuel Paparo to analyze security developments in the region. In addition, Kuok testified in March 2025 before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission on "'America First' cannot mean 'America alone': Engaging Southeast Asia" and in June 2025 before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on East Asia and the Pacific on "Economics is security: Building U.S. strategy in Southeast Asia." Kuok also provided the keynote for the Indo-Pacific Chiefs of Defense Conference in September 2024, chaired two ministerial-level panels at the February 2025 Munich Security Conference, and participated in small expert briefings at the White House in October 2024.



Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command Admiral Samuel Paparo analyzes security developments in the Indo-Pacific.

Understanding Japan's role in the Indo-Pacific

Senior Fellow Mireya Solís published several papers on American economic statecraft and new industrial policy in Asia, and her latest book, "Japan's Quiet Leadership: Reshaping the Indo-Pacific," was named one of Foreign Affairs' Best of Books 2024 in the Asia and Pacific category. The book, now available in Japanese, addressed the question of why and how Japan has emerged from the "lost decades" unscathed from the populist wave and a far more consequential actor in the geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific.

Engaging with key stakeholders in Japan and Taiwan

In December 2024, Brookings President Cecilia Rouse led a small delegation of scholars on a six-day trip to Japan and Taiwan. The tour was the first organized trip to the Asia-Pacific region with a Brookings president in five years and emphasized the Institution's longstanding scholarship on the region. The delegation had an action-packed week in Tokyo and Taipei, with 27 engagements that included meetings with policymakers and Brookings partners, speaking engagements, and substantive discussions with policy experts and other stakeholders. The first stop in Tokyo featured meetings with officials from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Economy, Trade, and Industry and a breakfast discussion with a gathering of Japan's leading business executives known as the Mount Fuji Dialogue. Highlights of the Taipei visit included meetings with Taiwan President Lai Ching-te, former President Tsai Ing-wen, high-level government officials, and leaders of all three major political parties. The delegation participated in a well-attended public event, co-hosted by Brookings and the Chung-Hua Institution for Economic Research, on recent geopolitical developments and U.S. policy.



THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

Informing U.S. policy toward the Russia-Ukraine war

After leaving Brookings in 2022 to serve as Senior Director for Strategic Planning at the National Security Council, Senior Fellow Thomas Wright returned to Brookings, where he has been a prominent voice on U.S. policy in Ukraine. In addition to his regular column, Wright wrote an op-ed in The Atlantic on why Putin needs to believe he can't win. Senior Fellow Constanze Stelzenmüller, a regular contributor to the Financial Times on the effect of the conflict and Europe's dynamics, testified before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Swiss Council of States for a January 2025 hearing examining whether strict neutrality still serves Switzerland. Senior Fellow Fiona Hill offered important insights into the U.S.-Russia relationship in appearances in 2024 and 2025 on CBS's "Face the Nation." She also moderated a conversation among two of the most prominent European critics of Russian policy, Yuliya Navalny and Svetlana Tikhanovskaya, at the Munich Security Conference in March 2024.

Examining roles in the Russia-Ukraine war

As the Russia-Ukraine conflict dragged into its third year, Brookings scholars continued to offer timely analysis of the conflict. In an extensive new series of analysis and commentary, "Reimagining Europe's security," scholars examined how European security should be reshaped in a time of conflict with Russia, as the United States reassesses its involvement. Meanwhile, as world leaders gathered at the Hague for the annual NATO summit in June 2025, Senior Fellow Michael O'Hanlon published an op-ed in The New York Times, "NATO is doing just fine, thank you."

Evaluating the effectiveness of U.S. sanctions on Russia

As policymakers reassess the role of sanctions in deterring Russian intervention in Ukraine, Brookings brought together leading experts to evaluate current measures and propose strategic refinements. In May 2024, the Economic Studies and Foreign Policy programs hosted a public event featuring Deputy National Security Advisor Daleep Singh and a panel of sanctions experts, including Brookings Senior Fellow Fiona Hill, to frame key challenges. The conversation laid the groundwork for a series of policy papers, released in July 2024, assessing the effectiveness of sanctions on Russia's economy. Contributors, including Nobel laureates Simon Johnson and Joseph Stiglitz, offered concrete recommendations, ranging from stricter enforcement on Russian oil tankers to options for responsibly repurposing frozen assets. Together, the project provided a menu of timely, evidence-based policy recommendations to guide future sanctions strategy and cross-sector coordination.



Ambassador of Finland to the United States Mikko Hautala (left) discusses the future of transatlantic security with Senior Fellow Constanze Stelzenmüller, director of the Center on the United States and Europe.

Artificial Intelligence & Technology

With a focus on ensuring new technologies are developed ethically, inclusively, and securely, Brookings scholars helped define responsible AI innovation and shape both domestic and international AI policy.



Competing with China on artificial intelligence

As the United States and China strive to best each other on artificial intelligence, Brookings scholars continually examine how AI will influence relations with China over the next five years. Nonresident Senior Fellow Colin Kahl co-authored an essay in The Atlantic, "The Real AI Race," while Nonresident Senior Fellow Yingyi Ma and Adjunct Professor at Syracuse University Ying Lin proposed policy recommendations for how the U.S. can gain the edge over China in education in an age of AI. Meanwhile, in a rigorous August 2025 commentary, "Interwoven frontiers: Energy, AI, and U.S.-China competition," Nonresident Senior Fellow R. David Edelman explored the complex intersection of AI and energy production, and how the United States and China may compete to address the energy demands of AI reliance.



Shaping human-human-AI collaboration

A Brookings paper co-authored by Center for Sustainable Development Fellow Jacob Taylor and Project Manager Kershlin Krishna coined the term "vibe teaming" as a pioneering approach to leveraging technology for human cooperation. The concept gained visibility at Human Tech Week and was cited by AI leader Nichol Bradford. It quickly sparked collaborations with social scientists, influenced practices within at least one major American automotive company, and informed a workshop for Australia's AI CoLab. Through a variety of platforms, including the 17 Rooms initiative co-organized by Brookings and The Rockefeller Foundation, the research is exploring scalable models for applying human-human-AI collaboration to complex problem-solving, with the potential to disrupt knowledge work in fundamental ways.



Senior Fellow and Director of the Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technology Initiative Elham Tabassi

Welcoming new leadership to the Artificial Intelligence & Emerging Technology Initiative (AIET)

Brookings welcomed new leadership to AIET with the hire of its director, Elham Tabassi. Tabassi was formerly chief AI advisor at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, where she wrote the widely adopted AI Risk Management Framework and was named one of TIME's 100 most influential people in AI. At Brookings, she has contributed to the Institution's research and convening agenda, briefed leaders in business and government, and participated in many high-profile international standards and governance discussions hosted by the Global Partnership on AI, Japanese AI Safety Institute, and on the sidelines of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) AI for Good Summit. AIET has led the adoption of a shared vision for Brookings' work in AI policy.



Senior Fellow and Director of the John L. Thornton China Center Ryan Hass (right) and Representative Jim Himes (D-Conn.) discuss the future of the U.S.-China relationship.

Advancing safety in AI and national security

A multi-year dialogue between Brookings Foreign Policy scholars and Tsinghua University counterparts informed a groundbreaking agreement between the United States and China to maintain human control over the decision to use nuclear weapons. The agreement was announced by Presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping at their November 2024 summit in Lima, Peru, and drew heavily on ideas developed in the dialogue, which was launched in 2019 and led by scholars from the John L. Thornton China Center and the Strobe Talbott Center for Security, Strategy, and Technology. Throughout the engagement, China Center Director Ryan Hass and the team coordinated with officials in both the Biden and Trump administrations around Brookings' analysis and findings from the dialogue, and their real-time input shaped the announcement in Lima.

Every study, every convening, every insight Brookings produces is aimed at one purpose: helping leaders make informed decisions that improve lives.



Informing national and global AI governance

Former Center for Technology Innovation (CTI) Fellow Chinasa T. Okolo contributed three sections to the "International AI Safety Report 2025," chaired by computer scientist Yoshua Bengio, one of the "godfathers" of AI. The report cites her article, "AI in the Global South: Opportunities and challenges towards more inclusive governance," which focuses on building equitable AI ecosystems in regions often excluded from global governance discussions. The report also references work by former CTI Fellow Alex Engler that highlights the impact of open-source development on competition, market concentration, and tech recruitment. In June 2025, the Congressional Research Service published "Regulating Artificial Intelligence: U.S. and International Approaches and Considerations for Congress," which also recognized Okolo's work on the importance of including Global South perspectives in a section on multi-country and bilateral AI governance. Okolo spoke about her work at the UNESCO Global Forum on the Ethics of AI in Bangkok and the Internet Governance Forum in Oslo, where she interviewed actor Joseph Gordon-Levitt. Meanwhile, Senior Fellow Nicol Turner Lee, director of the Center for Technology Innovation, served as plenary chair at the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona—marking her fifth year leading global discussions on mobile technologies and AI across industries.



Senior Fellow Darrell West

Understanding the impact of AI usage in political ads

In July 2024, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking" around the disclosure and transparency of AI-generated content in political advertisements. The notice cited the work of Center for Technology Innovation Senior Fellow Darrell M. West in its discussion of the potential public interest benefits and harms of AI-generated political ads. His piece, "How AI will transform the 2024 elections," highlighted how AI-generated ads enable "precise message targeting" of potential voters. This notice generated robust policy discussions across the political spectrum, contributing to debate around the FCC's authority to regulate the content of political ads and the importance of transparency in political ads.

Advancing responsible AI innovation

The Bipartisan House Task Force on Artificial Intelligence of the 118th Congress published a report in December 2024 that provides guiding principles and recommendations for advancing responsible AI innovation. A section of the report focused on the outsourcing of dataset labeling to gig workers in the Global South cites an article by former Fellow Chinasa T. Okolo and former Tech Ethics Fellow Marie Tano at the Center for Technology Innovation (CTI), "Moving toward truly responsible AI development in the global AI market." It also references an article written by former CTI Fellow Alex Engler that recommends transparent reporting requirements for AI adoption in government agencies.

Combating bias in AI

The AI Equity Lab convened and published two signature and well-cited pieces on AI use in health care and journalism. The AI Equity Lab also published the inaugural list of (un)Hidden Figures in AI, who are representative of various disciplines, backgrounds, and sectors that often are unrepresented in major technology conversations. The Electronic Privacy Information Center's October 2024 complaint to the Federal Trade Commission regarding OpenAI cites Senior Fellow Nicol Turner Lee's 2019 piece, "Algorithmic bias detection and mitigation: Best practices and policies to reduce consumer harms." Former Fellow Chinasa T. Okolo's paper, "African Data Ethics: A Discursive Framework for Black Decolonial AI," appeared at the 2025 ACM Conference on Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency (FAccT), the premier conference on AI ethics.



Senior Fellow and Director of the Center for Technology Innovation (CTI) Nicol Turner Lee



Senior Fellow Aaron Klein

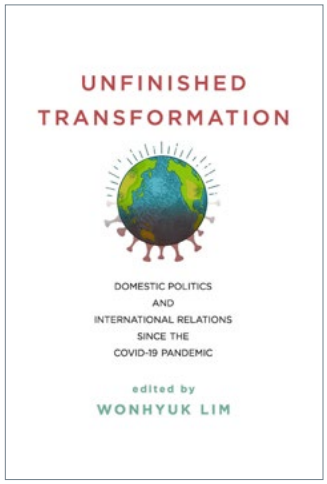
Informing U.S. AI policy

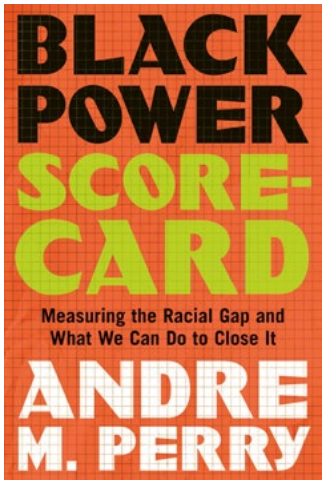
Senior Fellow Aaron Klein was a co-organizer of the Eighth Annual Fintech Conference at the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia in October 2024. Earlier, Senior Fellow Nicol Turner Lee, director of the Center for Technology Innovation, co-led and co-authored the first AI and risk management report for the Commodities Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) as part of her appointed role on the Technology Advisory Committee led by former CFTC Commissioner Christy Goldsmith-Romero. Lee also contributed to the development of the final AI report issued by the Bipartisan Task Force on Artificial Intelligence in December 2024 through participation in listening sessions. The work of Brookings scholars was referenced in the substantive body of the text. Nonresident Senior Fellow John Villasenor delivered testimony before the House Judiciary Committee Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property, Artificial Intelligence, and the Internet in May 2025 during a hearing titled, "Protecting our edge: Trade secrets and the global AI arms race."

Individuals are listed with the titles and affiliations they held at the time of the work or event described.

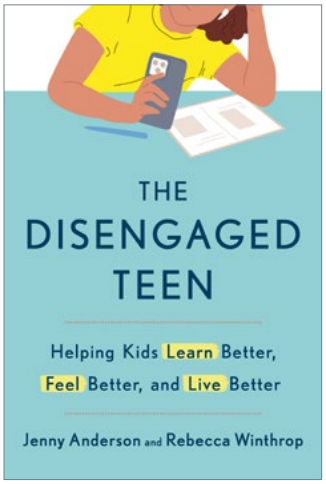
BOOKS BY BROOKINGS EXPERTS

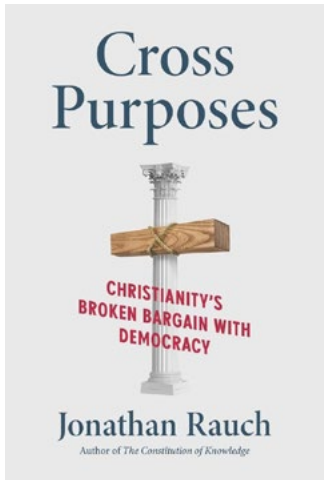
Through their books, Brookings experts provide deep, informative, and thought-provoking analysis of long-term challenges, pressing issues, and new opportunities. This year, our scholars published 19 books with both the Brookings Institution Press and external publishers, exploring topics such as education reform, climate change, democratic institutions, sustainable development, and international relations.

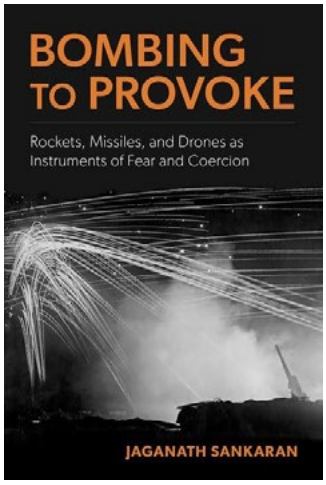


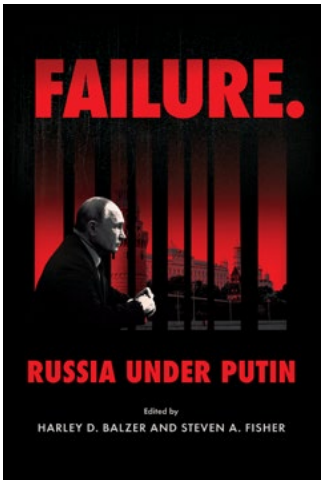


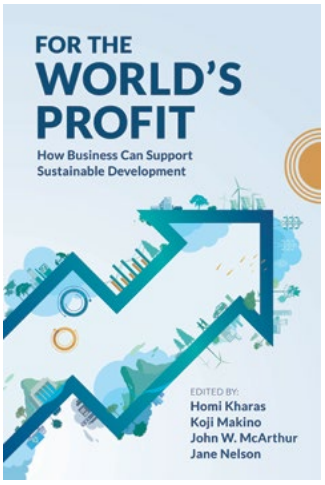


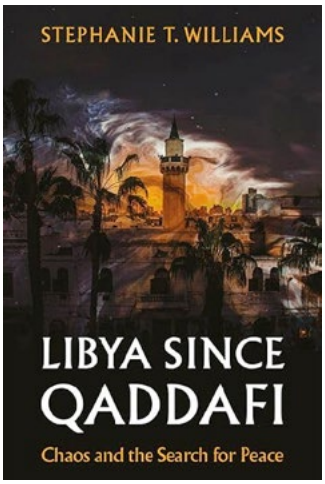


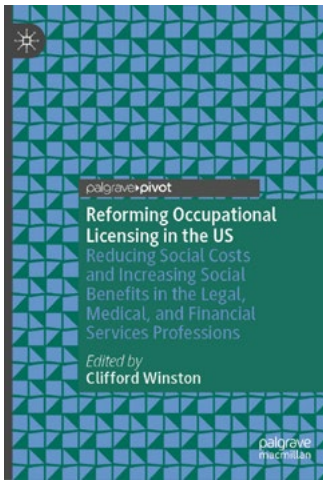


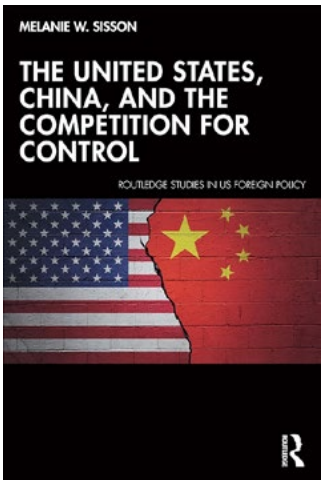


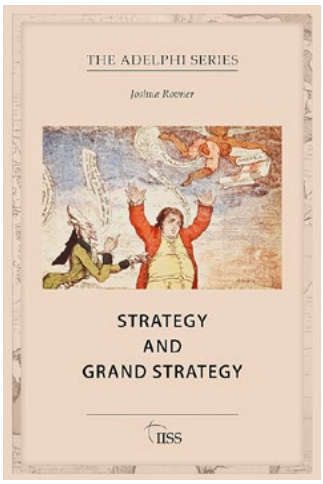


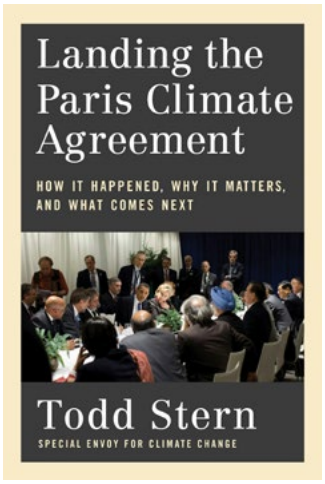


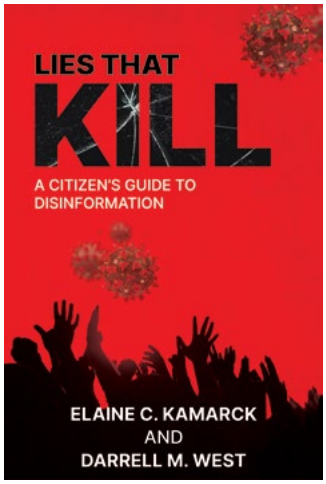

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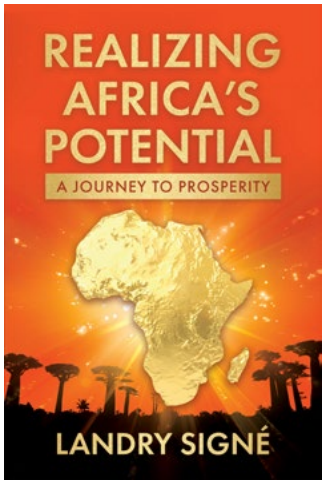

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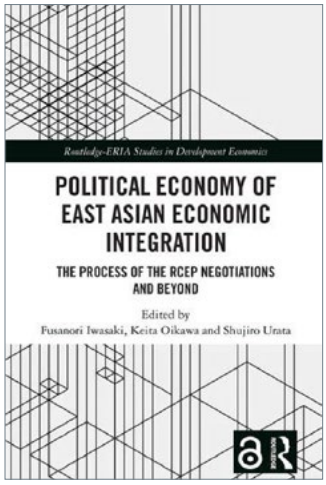

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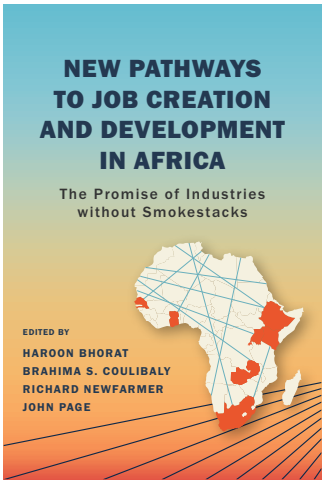

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Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2025 (in thousands)

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	FY 2025 Total
OPERATING REVENUE			
Revenue and Support			
Investment Return Designated for Operations	$16,163	$6,869	$23,032
Contributions, Grants, and Contracts	25,497	52,666	78,163
Program Service Revenue	1,256	-	1,256
Brookings Press	450	-	450
Interest, Dividends, and Currency Exchange Gain	1,770	-	1,770
Other Income	1,230	-	1,230
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	60,078	(60,078)	-
Total Operating Revenue	**106,444**	**(543)**	**105,901**
EXPENSES			
Program Services			
Economic Studies	22,473	-	22,473
Global Economy and Development	20,342	-	20,342
Foreign Policy	15,419	-	15,419
Governance Studies	14,108	-	14,108
Brookings Metro	12,790	-	12,790
Communications	2,913	-	2,913
Institutional Initiatives	1,610	-	1,610
Brookings Press	267	-	267
Total Program Services	**89,922**	**-**	**89,922**
Supporting Services			
Management and General	6,888	-	6,888
Fundraising	8,380	-	8,380
Total Operating Expenses	**105,190**	**-**	**105,190**
Change in Net Assets Before Non-Operating Activities	**1,254**	**(543)**	**711**
NON-OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Investment Return Designated for Operations	(16,163)	(6,869)	(23,032)
Investment Income	30,891	13,365	44,256
Post-Retirement Related Changes	135	-	135
Other Non-Operating Activities	-	-	-
Total Non-Operating Activities	**14,863**	**6,496**	**21,359**
Net Assets			
Beginning	257,073	230,767	487,840
Ending	$ 273,190	$236,720	$509,910

Statement of Financial Position

Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2025 (in thousands)

	FY 2025 Total
ASSETS	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	$27,461
Investments	485,691
Receivables (net)	26,632
Property and Equipment (net)	27,589
Other Assets	4,425
Total Assets	**571,798**
LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable and Accrued Expenses	14,377
Refundable Advances and Deferred Revenue	5,147
Other Liabilities	1,810
Notes Payable (net)	40,554
Total Liabilities	**61,888**
NET ASSETS	
Without Donor Restrictions	273,190
With Donor Restrictions	236,720
Total Net Assets	**509,910**
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	**$571,798**

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