

# Defining Challenges, Providing Solutions

**The last two years have demonstrated how a constantly shifting environment can dramatically affect the decisions that leaders make, in both government and the private sector.**

At Brookings, we take defining the problem and understanding the policy environment as a starting point for solutions that both address urgent needs and anticipate future conditions. In an often-turbulent world, Brookings stands—as we have for more than a century—as a leading source of research and analysis of the issues facing society. Hard problems aren't reason to abandon hope, but it is essential to channel hope toward meaningful progress. Even when challenges seem most difficult—whether it's the lingering pandemic, growing economic inequality, racial disparities, or a global climate crisis—Brookings offers real solutions rooted in evidence and data, improving lives and livelihoods every step of the way.



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## CO-CHAIRS' LETTER



**Glenn H. Hutchins**  
Co-Chair of the Board



**Suzanne Nora Johnson**  
Co-Chair of the Board

2021 began with great promise. As we envisioned a post-pandemic future, we had hopes that good governance could re-animate our politics, that the U.S. could reclaim world leadership, and that Brookings could re-open our doors to staff, guests, and events. But the mutating virus, internal division, and global strife all proved to be stubborn foes.

Nonetheless, we remained agile in adapting to these changing circumstances, allowing our scholars to continue their important work and impact on the issues facing our world. Our experts focused their research and analysis not just on the crises in the headlines, but on the underlying causes of the challenges facing society.

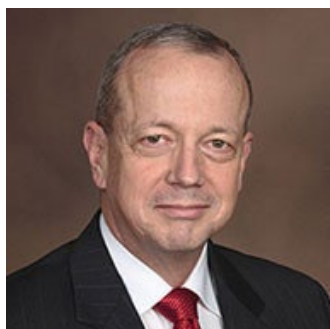
And there can be little doubt that these challenges are immense in scale, far-reaching in impact, and urgent in their need for innovative yet practical solutions. From climate change to rising authoritarianism to persistent economic inequality to advancing technologies, Brookings scholars applied the tools of rigorous research, sturdily rooted in scholarly independence, to foster deeper understanding of the issues and to advance good policy options to address them.

Our experts approach problems with a clear-eyed view of the current policy environment so

that their ideas will gain traction and inform the debate. The independent, non-partisan research that Brookings scholars produce on a daily basis does not seek to confirm anyone's preconceived ideas or advance their political goals. Instead, we begin with facts, analyze them thoroughly, and propose new ideas to improve both the common good and individual lives.

The work that Brookings does gives us genuine hope for the future. And this work is made possible by the generous support of our donors. Financial contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations, governments, and other organizations, along with a modest draw from our endowment, provide the resources that sustain our work. We're grateful to all who share our belief in the power of good governance grounded in smart policy and a commitment to improving quality of life in our local communities, promoting a vibrant and healthy national economy, and advancing peaceful relations between countries.

Your support and engagement help us enrich the public dialogue and build a safer, more prosperous world. On behalf of our fellow Trustees, our executive leadership, our scholars, and our staff, we thank you for your investment in our mission and confidence in our work.



**John R. Allen**

President

Following the daunting challenges of 2020, we saw important glimmers of hope in 2021 in the form of effective vaccines against COVID-19, early signs of societal reopening and recovery, the reemergence of U.S. leadership around the globe, and remarkable technological advancements. But we also witnessed one of America's darkest days in the form of the January 6 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, a growing climate crisis, the appearance of new and deadly COVID variants, continued systemic racism throughout the country, and economic inequality that leaves far too many people behind. Within this volatile landscape of opportunities tempered with challenges, Brookings experts met the moment with innovative, actionable policy solutions, as they have throughout the Institution's 105-year history.

The Brookings Institution thrives in uncertain times such as these because of our deep commitment to understanding the policy environment in which these opportunities and challenges are situated. As we work toward a better, brighter future of peace and prosperity for all, our scholars continue to identify and diagnose problems and offer solutions that address the root causes, not just the symptoms. This 2021 report provides a sample of our approach, our impact, and the contributions of our many experts.

As with so many other organizations, Brookings continued to work remotely to protect the health and safety of our scholars, staff, and guests. Despite the ongoing disruptions, our experts continued to have a major impact on both urgent problems and the long-term issues that require sustained attention. Brookings's research and analyses were sought out and read unlike ever before across a broad range of issues, and our scholars were in high demand from media and policymakers alike.

Following the election, a number of Brookings scholars and staff took a leave of absence to serve on agency teams and assist with the transition to the new administration. Subsequently, 26 individuals have officially joined the Biden administration in senior policy and leadership positions. We are proud that so many from the Brookings community are continuing our longstanding tradition of public service, just as we're secure in the knowledge that they are bringing the world-class expertise and many original, practical ideas they developed at our Institution into the new government.

Our [Blueprints for American Renewal & Prosperity](#) project, a series of innovative, implementable federal policy ideas on racial justice, worker mobility, economic growth and dynamism, global governance, international security, climate resiliency, and more, were published to coincide with key inflection points during the presidential transition and early in the Biden administration. Brookings also launched a new Institution-wide effort on climate, the [Brookings Initiative on Climate Research and Action](#), which leverages our ability, across a full and significant spectrum of expertise, to inform key stakeholders to advance meaningful change.

The accomplishments of Brookings experts highlighted in this report and the remarkable level of impact they've had on policy are only possible through the support and engagement of donors who support our work. We are deeply grateful to all whose generosity sustains this Institution and propels our scholars forward in pursuit of our mission to solve problems at the local, national, and global levels. I hope you'll enjoy this review of the past year and will take the time to explore and engage with Brookings now and in the future. Thank you, and please stay safe and well.

# Anatomy of Impact: Inclusive Economic Recovery in U.S. Cities and Metropolitan Areas

As the country and world increasingly grappled with the enormous impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, interest in the Brookings Metro's valuable thought leadership and analysis of local and state economies surged. The pandemic urged scholars to swiftly shift gears to meet the moment by not only helping local leaders mitigate the devastating effects of the COVID-19 recession on their workers and small businesses, but also help rebuild a more resilient economy in its wake. The nation's increased attention to racial injustice provided opportunities for Brookings Metro's scholars to showcase the pervasiveness of policy impacts on racial inequities. Now, as Brookings Metro commemorates its [25th anniversary](#), the challenges and opportunities facing cities have drastically evolved, fueling the exchange between the program's pathbreaking ideas and the delivery mechanism for its impact and influence.

## Rebuild Better: Tools to Support an Equitable Recovery

Starting in early 2020, Brookings Metro began to inform and enable local action in response to the COVID-19 economic crisis and by summer was responding to exigencies facing regional economies with a range of products and efforts. Brookings Metro developed the publicly accessible [COVID-19 Metro Recovery Watch](#) to track data on how the crisis is impacting metropolitan economies and share policy ideas and best practices for local and state leaders to promote an inclusive recovery.

These efforts included the [Metro Recovery Index](#), which tracks the performance of 192 metropolitan areas around the country on indicators covering the labor market, real estate market, and levels of economic activity. Another tool, the [Spotlight on Local Recovery Efforts](#), provides detailed case studies of novel or promising approaches, practices, and policies that can set the stage for a more equitable COVID-19 economic recovery and longer-run inclusive growth. The Metro Recovery Index and Spotlights series in turn helped inform Brookings Metro's [Actionable Ideas for Recovery in American Cities](#), which includes a series of policy ideas aimed at providing local leaders in government, business, nonprofits, and higher education a recovery

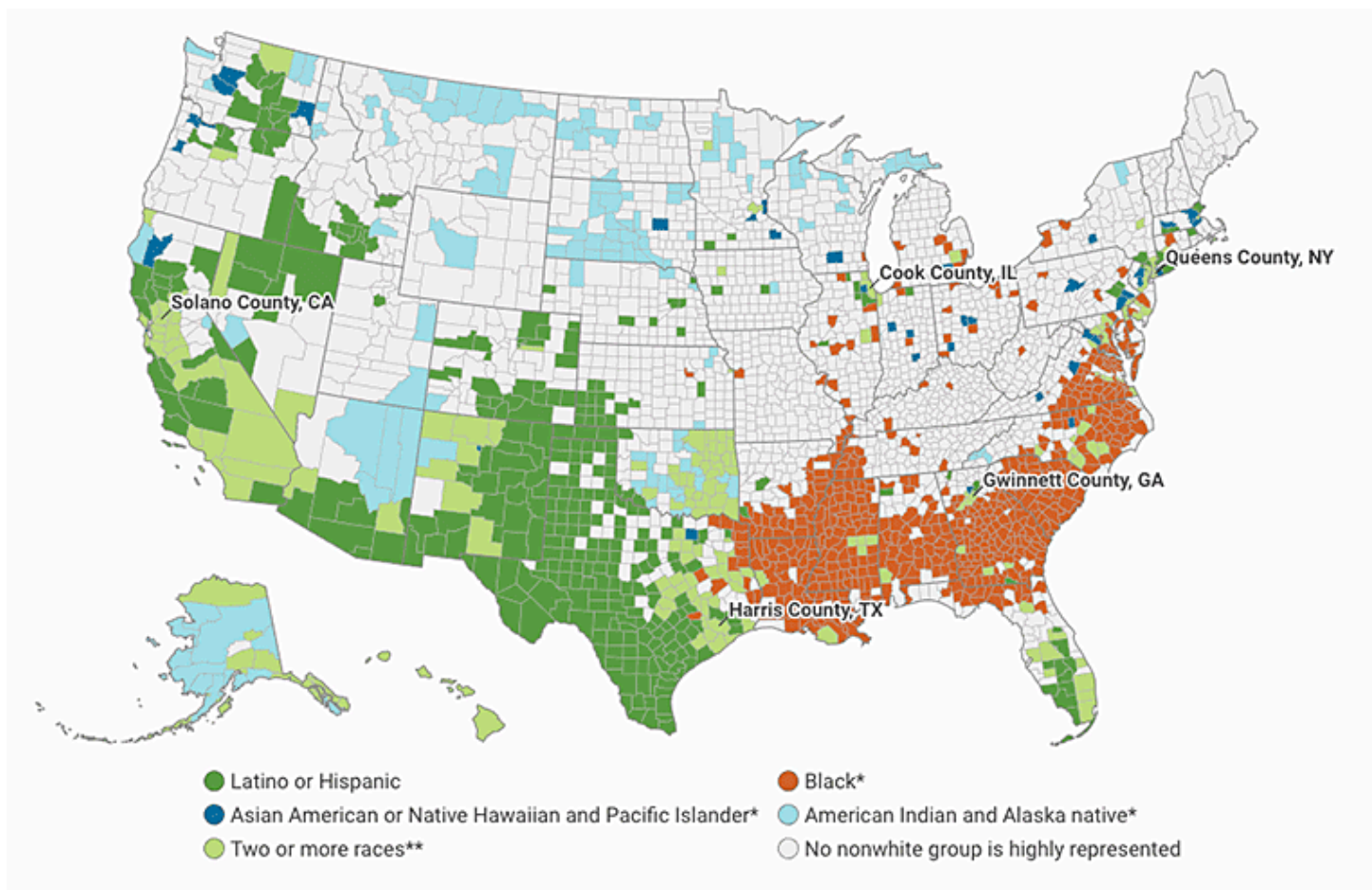
framework through a set of nine concrete ideas for rebuilding better. While achieving a more prosperous and equitable future requires the actions of many individuals, organizations, and policymakers (not least, funding from the federal government to forestall severe cuts in state and local services), this series offers practical steps that local leaders can take as a down payment toward broader reform.



## Setting a new agenda for American cities

A conversation with San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria and Montgomery, Alabama Mayor Steven Reed.

► [Watch the full event](#)



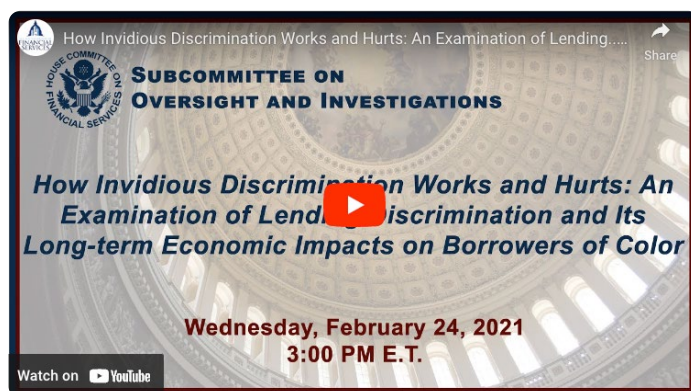
### Mapping America's diversity with the 2020 census

The 2020 census results show America's "diversity explosion" is continuing. Yet the country's racial and ethnic diversity, as shown in national statistics, takes different forms in different places.

► [Learn more about mapping diversity](#)

### Combating Systemic Racism in Policymaking

Persistent discrimination in the housing market has deep ramifications for Black households' ability to build wealth and achieve the American dream. While homes in metropolitan areas across the country have skyrocketed in value, homeowners in disproportionately Black and Latino or Hispanic neighborhoods are gaining wealth at only half the rate of homeowners in disproportionately white neighborhoods. In February 2021, Brookings Metro Senior Fellow Andre M. Perry testified before the House Committee on Financial Services' Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations during a hearing titled [How Invidious Discrimination Works and Hurts: An Examination of Lending Discrimination and Its Long-term Economic Impacts on Borrowers of Color](#). Perry was vocal in asserting that while overt discrimination in U.S. housing policy has been outlawed, systemic racism in the housing ecosystem continues to impact Black families, both through the actions of individual appraisers as well as the broader industry's devaluation of majority-Black communities.



### Combating systemic racism in policymaking

Senior Fellow Andre Perry testified on racism in housing

► [Watch on Youtube](#)

Housing policy is not the only area that privileges white people by rigging processes and implementation structures that widen racial disparities across numerous quality-of-life indicators. Among his first acts in office, President Biden signed an [Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities](#) through the Federal Government. Perry's work aims to help legislators understand how to achieve equity through a robust measurement methodology. He argues for a scoring system that holds federal policymakers "accountable to basic democratic principles such as racial inclusion." Perry's conversations with Representative Gregory W. Meeks (D-N.Y.) led to the introduction of the [Social and Economic Equity Promotion Act](#), a bill to require analyses from the Congressional Budget Office of how legislative proposals would impact historically underserved communities, including communities of color and others that have experienced longstanding social and economic inequality.

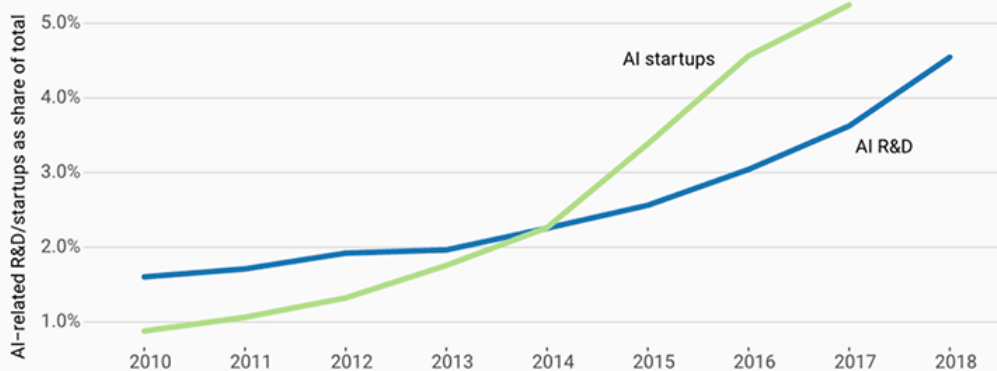
## Creating Network Effects: The Brookings Network for Economic Inclusion

Launched in 2018, the Brookings Network for Economic Inclusion (BNEI) serves as Brookings Metro's practitioner-driven network, with a primary emphasis on how to organize the complex work of inclusive economic growth, including the language and dynamics around race and racism. By 2020, BNEI had grown to include representatives from more than a dozen cities and is now relaunching with an expansive vision for more participation across cities and sectors. Network participants have exhibited strong demand for learning and connection, enthusiasm for new peer exchange-

es, and strong interest in expanding collaborations with their economic development peers. Over the last year, BNEI served as a rapid response focus group to discuss challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, where members and scholars participated in more than a dozen virtual convenings and webinars to discuss policy ideas, share best practices, and partner on new and innovative research.

## Developing a Vision, Structure, and Plan for Inclusive Growth in Birmingham, Alabama

In 2019, Birmingham Mayor Randall Woodfin and Birmingham-based business leaders reached out to Brookings Metro to help support an [evidence-based, cross-sector economic development vision](#) for the city of Birmingham and surrounding communities. Over the course of several months, Brookings Metro experts conducted a market assessment, engaged a new generation of leaders, and offered strategic advice for the region, which led to the creation of a new public-private sector initiative, [Prosper Birmingham](#). Launched in 2020, Prosper Birmingham is a dynamic coalition of community, civic, and business leaders committed to creating a more vibrant, racially and gender inclusive economy. Prosper Birmingham has already made key investments towards improving the Black business ecosystem, helping young adults access careers and college, and nurturing a new health tech initiatives that will bring together entrepreneurs, university researchers, and community groups in the development of population health solutions that can generate new jobs and opportunities locally.



Source: Brookings analysis of data from Crunchbase and Burning Glass data available via StanfordHAI 2021 AI Index

**Brookings Metro published a data-driven snapshot of the growth and geography of the emerging artificial intelligence (AI) economy in the United States.**

► [Learn more about the AI economy](#)

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd, Mayor Woodfin, University of Alabama at Birmingham President Ray L. Watts, and a group of Birmingham CEOs announced a joint commitment to expand supplier diversity, including making sure that investments in local Black businesses are tracked and made transparent. The mayor's office credited engagement with Brookings Metro for inspiration, including helping create the right conditions to set a credible public-private partnership table that made such an initiative possible.



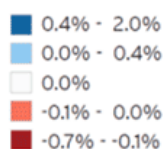
## Prosper Birmingham

Brookings Metro helped convene Prosper Birmingham, a multi-year, cross-sector coalition of community, civic and business leaders aimed at putting Birmingham on a stronger path toward growth, prosperity, and inclusion. Prosper President J.W. Carpenter, Birmingham Promise Executive Director Rachel Harmon, Prosper board member and KMS CEO Mike Kemp, Acclinate co-founder and community leader Tiffany Whitlow, and Prosper Chairman and Alabama Power CEO Mark Crosswhite (from left).

## Regional Innovation Hubs

### Metros by change in share of total innovation sector jobs

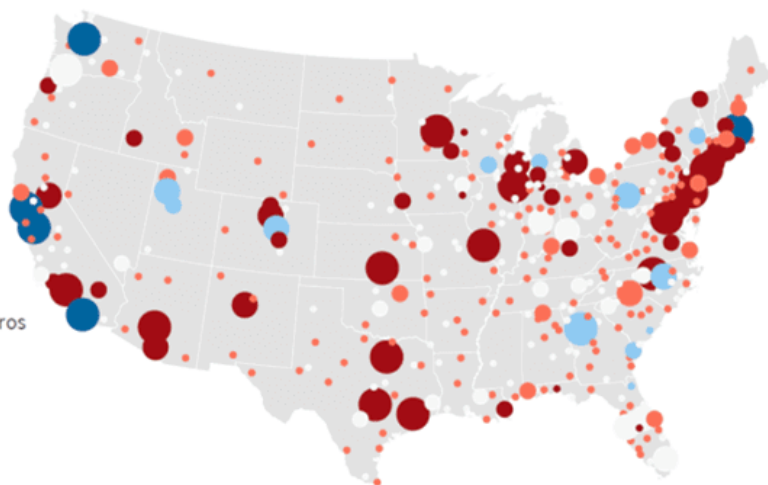
Share of innovation sector jobs change, 2005-17



Innovation sector jobs, 2005



Top 5% of metros  
Next 5%  
Next 15%  
Bottom 75%



Source: Brookings and ITIF analysis of Emsi data

### Regional Tech Innovation Hubs

Metros by change in share of total innovation sector jobs

► [Learn more about innovation jobs](#)

Senior Fellow Mark Muro has recently made the case for regional technology hubs as important potential drivers of growth, opportunity, and inclusion for underrepresented people and places. Muro argues that creating a network of regional tech hubs across the nation represents not just an economic priority, but one of equity. His work on regional innovation hubs directly informed President Biden's American Jobs Plan, including a major program to invest in regional clusters initiatives across the country. Furthermore, in August 2021, the U.S. Senate passed major bi-partisan legislation for American competitiveness against rising China, which included \$10 billion in funding to establish regional tech hubs to drive growth in regions far from the nation's coastal "superstar" metros. The legislation seeks to create more globally competitive regional

centers and to foster economic, racial, and geographic inclusion—in tech and beyond. A companion bill is now before the House for further action and reconciliation.

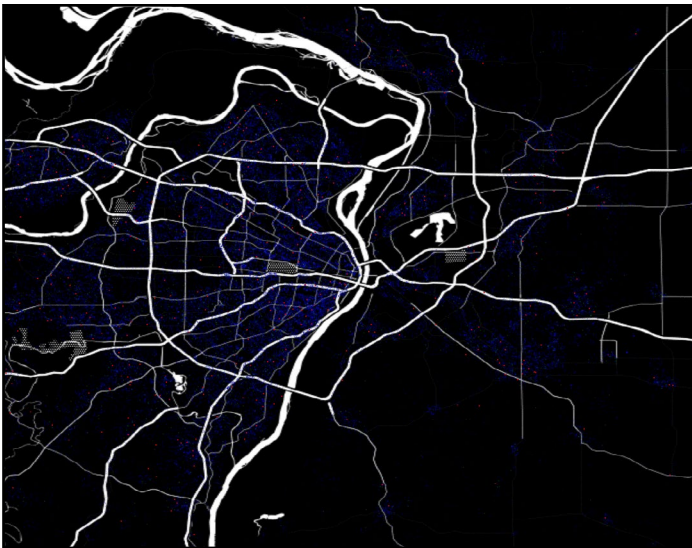
Also related, in early 2021 the New Democrat Coalition sent a letter to President Joe Biden, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and Majority Leader Steny Hoyer urging action on a slate of bold, innovative policies to help end the pandemic and rebuild robust economic growth and opportunity that works for every American. The letter included two congressional bill proposals, one of which was the Innovation Centers Acceleration Act, informed by Muro's landmark report, "The case for growth centers: How to spread tech innovation across America."

Learn more about Brookings Metro at [brookings.edu/program/brookings-metro/](https://brookings.edu/program/brookings-metro/) and follow @BrookingsMetro

# Informing Economic Policy in a Global Pandemic

Over the past year, as the COVID-19 pandemic raged on and the United States looked for ways to reopen the economy while maintaining public health and safety, Economic Studies scholars drew on their expertise to provide sound advice to policymakers. Economic Studies research helped federal and state leaders examine the continuing impact of the pandemic on the labor market and disparities in socio-economic outcomes, and how social insurance and emergency programs were aiding the economic recovery. Economic Studies scholars also continued their vital work on climate policy, the health care system, social inequality, monetary and fiscal policy—including retirement and taxes—and financial stability.

## Modeling Containment Strategies in St. Louis



### Animated map of St. Louis

Simulated agents in the St. Louis metro region are color-coded by disease state (Blue=Susceptible, Red=Infected, Green=Recovered) to help policymakers develop COVID-19 containment policies.

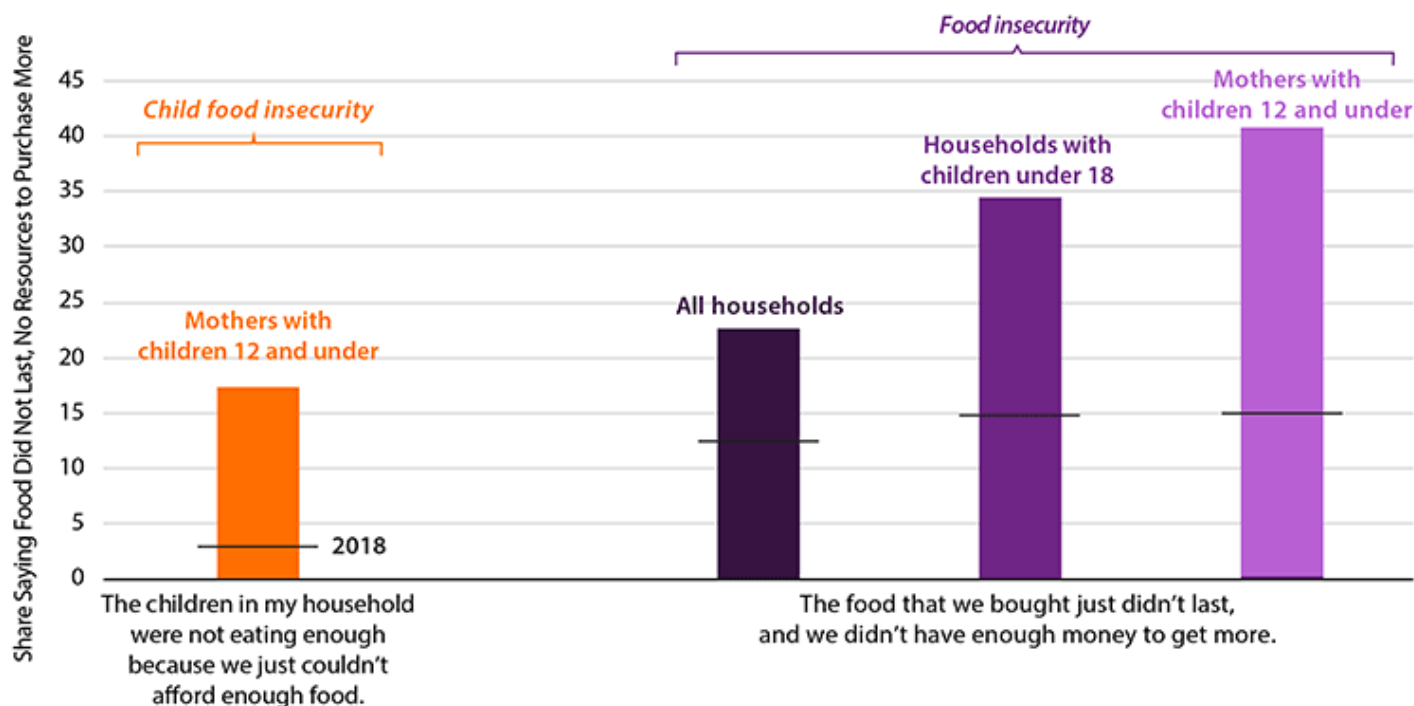
► [Learn more about the simulations](#)

The [TRACE-STL](#) project provided critical guidance for state and local policymakers on how to effectively contain the local spread

of COVID-19 in the face of continuing uncertainty about virus variants and vaccine uptake. Building on [previous work](#) at the national level and working closely with the [St. Louis Department of Health](#), scholars in the Center on Social Dynamics and Policy (CSDP) developed a highly realistic simulation framework to assist the department in developing robust containment policies and practices to minimize cases of COVID-19 among the metro area's three million residents. This work demonstrates the value of using an [agent-based computational modeling](#) approach to assist policymakers in developing highly customized policies, while managing the substantial uncertainty that remains part of managing both the COVID-19 pandemic and pandemics to come.

The results of the work were incorporated into practice on the ground and featured in a public outreach campaign by the [health department](#). Building on the successful collaboration with St. Louis, Senior Fellow and CSDP Director Ross Hammond also presented the approach to the San Francisco Department of Health, the Utah Department of Health, a UK cabinet office, and advisors to the French government, among others. Additionally, he gave an invited briefing on the [TRACE model](#) to the Bipartisan Working Group caucus of the U.S. Congress, focusing on contact tracing and testing capacity related to COVID-19. CSDP scholars are continuing this work with particular emphasis on the endgame for the current pandemic and on better preparedness for rapid response to future pandemics, which pose an increasing threat.

## COVID-19 and Food Insecurity



### Food Insecurity in the United States, April 2020

Data shows the high levels of food insecurity observed in the COVID Impact Survey and in the Survey of Mothers with Young Children.

► [Learn more about food insecurity](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic increased food insecurity in the United States, particularly among families with [children](#). The Hamilton Project played a critical role in ensuring policymakers focused on this issue and provided guidance and technical assistance regarding the federal response. Hamilton Project Fellow Lauren Bauer has led these efforts by providing timely analysis and expertise, including [tracking food insecurity](#) in the U.S. and evaluating the effects of nutrition assistance programs. Outreach efforts to disseminate this work included publications; stakeholder engagement; several briefings for policymakers and reporters with partners including Share our Strength/No Kid Hungry and the Urban Institute; [testimony](#) on the future of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) before the U.S. House of Representatives Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations; and dozens of interviews with reporters that generated extensive coverage in leading outlets. The Hamilton Project's [work](#) influenced the federal response on nutrition assistance including the collection of national food insecurity data, the authorization and [extension](#) of [Pandemic EBT](#), the maximum benefit increase to SNAP, the suspension of SNAP work requirements, the dissolution of the prior administration's [rulemaking](#), and the current administration's executive actions.

Two in five households with mothers with children 12 and under were food insecure.



### The Future of SNAP

Hamilton Project Fellow Lauren Bauer testifies before the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Nutrition, Oversight, and Department Operations.

► [Watch on Youtube](#)

## Helping Coal-Reliant Communities in the Fight Against Climate Change

As the Biden administration and the world grapple with how best to tackle climate change, former Senior Fellow Adele Morris's [work](#) has helped show how a small fraction of revenue from a carbon price could fund billions of dollars annually in local investments and deliver direct assistance to coal industry workers. If the United States undertakes actions to address the risks of climate change, the use of coal in the power sector will decline rapidly, presenting major burdens on the workers employed by the industry and their communities. Over the past year, Morris spoke with dozens of Congressional members and staff about how they can provide assistance for coal-reliant communities in carbon pricing legislation. Prior to the pandemic, Morris travelled across the U.S. to meet directly with elected officials and local stakeholders in coal communities to discuss options and potential redistributive outcomes of a carbon tax. The risks from the financial decline of coal-reliant communities are not limited to the United States, so Morris has also engaged extensively with stakeholders in other countries to disseminate her ideas more broadly.



Former Senior Fellow Adele Morris's carbon tax proposals can help coal-reliant communities in the transition to clean energy.

## Taking On Surprise Medical Billing

### Physicians that Can Surprise Bill Have Very High Charges

Ratio of Charges to Medicare Allowed Amounts by Physician Type, 2016

	20th Percentile	Median	80th Percentile
Anesthesiologists	2.25	5.51	11.08
Emergency Medicine	2.79	4.65	7.50
Diagnostic Radiology	2.64	4.02	8.03
Pathology	2.25	3.43	5.10
All Other Specialists	1.46	2.27	4.01
All Primary Care	1.39	2.03	3.54

Source: Analysis of Medicare Provider Utilization and Payment Data: Physician and Other Supplier Public Use File, 2016

USC Schaeffer

BROOKINGS

#### ► Learn more about surprise medical billing

High health care costs are a major concern for many U.S. families. One source of these costs was surprise out-of-network billing, where consumers received very large bills for out-of-network care, even though they did not intentionally select an out-of-network health care provider. The USC-Brookings Schaeffer Initiative on Health Policy began working to bring awareness to this issue

in 2016, starting with an initial white [paper](#) outlining the problem and its ramifications.

The Initiative's scholars continued this work over the next four years. Through their sophisticated analysis, the Schaeffer Initiative created an evidence-based playbook to help federal and state policymakers tackle surprise billing—educating them on its causes, showing that the practice was driving up premiums, and warning of the dangers of basing arbitration decisions on provider charges, as New York and New Jersey had

done in their attempts at reform. The team also analyzed each Congressional proposal on the topic and made suggestions to improve them, leading to eleven Hill briefings and Congressional testimony; they also regularly provided technical assistance to policymakers. The No Surprises Act, enacted in late 2020, steers clear of the inflationary solutions their work warned against and incorporates many provisions to improve the law identified by their analysis.

## Informing the Federal Reserve's Longer-Term Goals



On its 50th anniversary, scholars, journalists, and policymakers reflect on the history and impact of the Brookings Papers on Economic Activity

► [Watch on Youtube](#)

In August 2020, the Federal Reserve released a [new statement](#) of its longer-term goals, which described how the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) will change its approach to achieving

its dual mandate of price stability and maximum employment. After a comprehensive [review](#) of its existing monetary policy framework, the update was made to reflect changes in the economy over the past decade and how policymakers are taking these changes into account in conducting monetary policy.

Over the past several years, the Economic Studies program, and the [Brookings Papers on Economic Activity](#) (BPEA) in particular, have published a number of [papers](#) that informed the FOMC's thinking. The idea for a regular review of the monetary policy framework was promoted in a fall 2018 BPEA [paper](#) by Boston Fed President Eric S. Rosengren and colleagues, and the formal review began soon after. In 2017, Distinguished Fellow in Residence Ben Bernanke [proposed](#) temporary price-level targeting—which influenced the flexible average inflation targeting that has become part of the new framework. Additionally, several other BPEA and Economic Studies papers explored alternatives to the Federal Reserve's two percent inflation target and how to conduct monetary policy in a low-interest, low-inflation environment. Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell's speech announcing the change referenced several Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, including a [paper](#) by Vice President and Director of Economic Studies Stephanie Aaronson.

Learn more about Economic Studies at [brookings.edu/program/economic-studies/](https://brookings.edu/program/economic-studies/) and follow @BrookingsEcon

# From Crisis to Innovation

After a tumultuous four years, 2021 marked a shift in leadership in the United States, with the new Biden administration seeking to re-engage with the world and reassert its traditional leadership role on the international stage. A variety of forces have reshaped the geopolitical landscape, with far-reaching consequences—the COVID-19 pandemic, heightened geopolitical competition, an intensifying climate crisis, and a highly polarized U.S. electorate. At this fraught and complicated moment, Brookings Foreign Policy (FP) scholars, led by Vice President and Director Suzanne Maloney, are drawing on their expertise and experience to put forth deep analysis and actionable solutions to meet them. FP's research and recommendations inform the public debate and provide senior national security officials and other stakeholders in Washington and around the world with trusted insights to advance peace and security around the world.

## Sustaining Impact Through Public Service

As the Biden administration undertakes an ambitious foreign policy agenda, an unprecedented 18 Brookings Foreign Policy program-affiliated scholars have heeded the call of public service. The nomination and appointment of [these scholars](#) to

senior positions in the White House and across the executive branch reinforces Brookings' ongoing impact and reflects the deep expertise, experience, and insight that are our trademarks. Brookings scholars have served in the National Security Council or Departments of State or Defense for every U.S. president since Franklin D. Roosevelt.

## Foreign Policy Books Offer In-Depth Analysis

Brookings Foreign Policy scholars play a prominent role in informing public and policy debates. Even as they respond nimbly to rapidly changing events with insightful commentary, FP's comparative advantage remains long-form research—in-depth, original, policy-relevant analysis and recommendations that go beyond the day-to-day developments to consider the underlying dynamics and offer compelling ideas for addressing the toughest problems facing the international community. In 2021 the program published more long-form content than ever, including a record 20 books by Brookings Foreign Policy scholars.



## The China Question

The challenges and opportunities posed by China represent the central strategic question facing Washington and the world. Through an array of high-level virtual events, off-the-record briefings with Cabinet officials, Track Two dialogues, and through numerous outputs such as commentaries, books, papers, videos, and podcasts, Foreign Policy is providing meaningful and tangible impact on China policy in Washington and beyond.

Foreign Policy's comprehensive two-year project, [Global China: Assessing China's Growing Role in the World](#), provided policymakers and the public with an empirical baseline for assessing China's regional and worldwide ambitions following its emergence as a truly global actor shaping every major issue and the international system. The papers published over the previous two years culminated in an [edited volume](#) that was released in June 2021.



### Here are the facts about China's role on the world stage

Brookings Senior Fellow Ryan Hass considers China's main activities around the globe.

► [Watch on Youtube](#)

Additionally, Foreign Policy scholars are in exceptionally high demand from U.S. officials and other key decision-makers to help understand and chart a way forward on issues related to China. Among FP scholars' many engagements, Senior Fellow David Dollar has briefed high-level officials at the Departments of Commerce and Treasury and at the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, and Senior Fellow Ryan Hass has provided insights and perspectives to officials on the Indo-Pacific teams at the National Security Council and State Department. Hass's new book, [Strateger: Adapting America's China Strategy in an Age of Competitive Interdependence](#), has received considerable attention and praise from readers, including senior foreign policy leadership and their staffs. This was the one of a record seven new books on China and Asia published by FP scholars in 2021.

The transition to digital convening has expanded FP's reach, enabling audiences in 70 countries to engage with our virtual brief-

ings and events. In addition, digital convening has only enhanced our ability to sustain substantive, in-depth conversations with counterparts around the world. The John L. Thornton China Center has spearheaded several private dialogues among U.S. and Chinese leaders to address crucial issues in U.S.-China relations.

The Thornton China Center has also collaborated with Yale's Paul Tsai China Center to generate proposals for the future of U.S. policy toward China. In preparation for the U.S. presidential transition, 17 prominent scholars offered specific, pragmatic recommendations for how the United States should adapt its policy toward China to respond to current realities while protecting and promoting America's security, prosperity, interests, and values. The joint monograph was read by senior members of the Biden transition team, including cabinet-level designates, and received positive feedback from Capitol Hill, senior State Department officials, and the U.S. and Chinese business community.

## Engagement Around Foreign Policy Crises



### How should the United States respond to today's security crises?

So how should the United States respond to today's security crises? Senior Fellow Michael O'Hanlon proposes a grand strategy of resolute restraint.

► [Watch on Youtube](#)

Brookings Foreign Policy scholars published timely and clear-eyed analyses of the Biden administration's decision to withdraw from Afghanistan, its execution, and the wider implications for regional stability and U.S. credibility and capabilities. Following the fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban, Foreign Policy experts actively wrote and commented on the unfolding developments and their consequences, including through numerous high-profile media engagements. Madiha Afzal, Vanda Felbab-Brown, Michael O'Hanlon, and Bruce Riedel shared their diverse perspectives through [Agence France-Presse](#), the BBC, [Foreign Affairs](#), [Foreign Policy](#), [National Public Radio](#), [Politico](#), [The Telegraph](#), [CBS News](#), [CNBC](#), [the Financial Times](#), [The Jerusalem Post](#), and [The Washington Post](#), among other outlets. The vigorously argued



Foreign Policy's Center for Middle East Policy hosted a major international conference in February bringing together leaders and experts to discuss policy priorities from the region, the United States, and beyond. The conference, "The Middle East and the new U.S. administration," included remarks from King Abdullah II of Jordan, Iraqi President Barham Salih, Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Representative Gregory Meeks, and others. In addition, Brett McGurk, who serves as Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa at the National Security Council, headlined a roundtable on the sidelines of the conference.

debate among FP scholars on this issue reflected the breadth of knowledge and diversity of perspectives that are a distinctive characteristic of Brookings scholarship.

During the May 2021 escalation of hostilities between the Israeli military and Palestinian militants, Foreign Policy scholars including Daniel L. Byman, Tamara Cofman Wittes, Shadi Hamid, Natan Sachs, and Shibley Telhami explained the nuance and implications of the crisis through analysis and off-the-record briefings with key policymakers and members of Congress. They also discussed the consequences of the conflict, the U.S. position in the Middle East, and the future of the U.S. partnership with Israel and other regional allies in leading media outlets such as *The Atlantic*, *The Boston Globe*, CNN, *The Megyn Kelly Show*, MSNBC, *The Washington Post*, and others.

## Nonstate Armed Actors and Transnational Threats

Around the world, nonstate armed actors—militants, militias, and criminal groups—are increasingly powerful and have become a highly consequential and complex element shaping today's international system at the expense of the state. To examine

this increasingly salient issue, Foreign Policy launched a new [Initiative on Nonstate Armed Actors](#) in November. Led by Senior Fellow Vanda Felbab-Brown, the initiative has brought together FP's workstreams related to armed groups, illicit economies, terrorism, and violent extremism within a single organizational hub that reflects the truly transnational nature of these challenges.

## The Impact of Race and Identity on U.S. Foreign Policy

The pandemic exacerbated deep-rooted socioeconomic inequities in the United States and abroad, prompting protests, a nation-wide reckoning, and an international response to the Black Lives Matter and Stop Asian Hate movements. Recognizing the ripple effects on American diplomacy and soft power, the Foreign Policy program explored the impact of racial and religious identity on U.S. foreign policy and national security.

On June 24, the Center on the United States and Europe invited Pap Ndiaye, head of the National Museum of the History of Immigration in Paris, and Rashawn Ray, David M. Rubenstein Fellow in Governance Studies, for the [16th annual Raymond Aron Lecture](#), in which they provided a comparative analysis of the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States and the anti-racist movement in France, exploring their effects on the trans-Atlantic relationship.

## Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month event

During Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month in May, the Foreign Policy program convened a conference on the surge of anti-Asian hate crimes and violence featuring keynotes from Brookings President John R. Allen and Representatives Grace Meng (D-N.Y.), and Andy Kim (D-N.J.). At the conference, Senior Fellow and Director of the John L. Thornton China Center Cheng Li and guest scholars weighed the domestic and foreign policy consequences of anti-Asian racism on American identity and U.S.-China competition.



► [View the entire event](#)

Learn more about Foreign Policy at [brookings.edu/program/foreign-policy/](https://brookings.edu/program/foreign-policy/) and follow @BrookingsFP

# The Pandemic's Impact on the Global Economy

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the global economy faced numerous challenges and uncertainties, including slowing growth, increasing trade tensions, rising inequality, declining well-being, and deglobalization. Global Economy and Development scholars have been working to identify opportunities to ensure a more equitable future and dramatically improve the lives of the world's most vulnerable populations.

## The Promise and Challenge of Migration

Senior Fellow Dany Bahar continued his work on migration, outlining the untapped potential of refugees as an engine of economic growth. Bahar's work on the Venezuelan refugee crisis was cited by Colombian President Iván Duque in a *Washington Post* op-ed. Bahar was also part of a high-level discussion at the White House on comprehensive strategies to address the root causes of migration and improve regional cooperation.

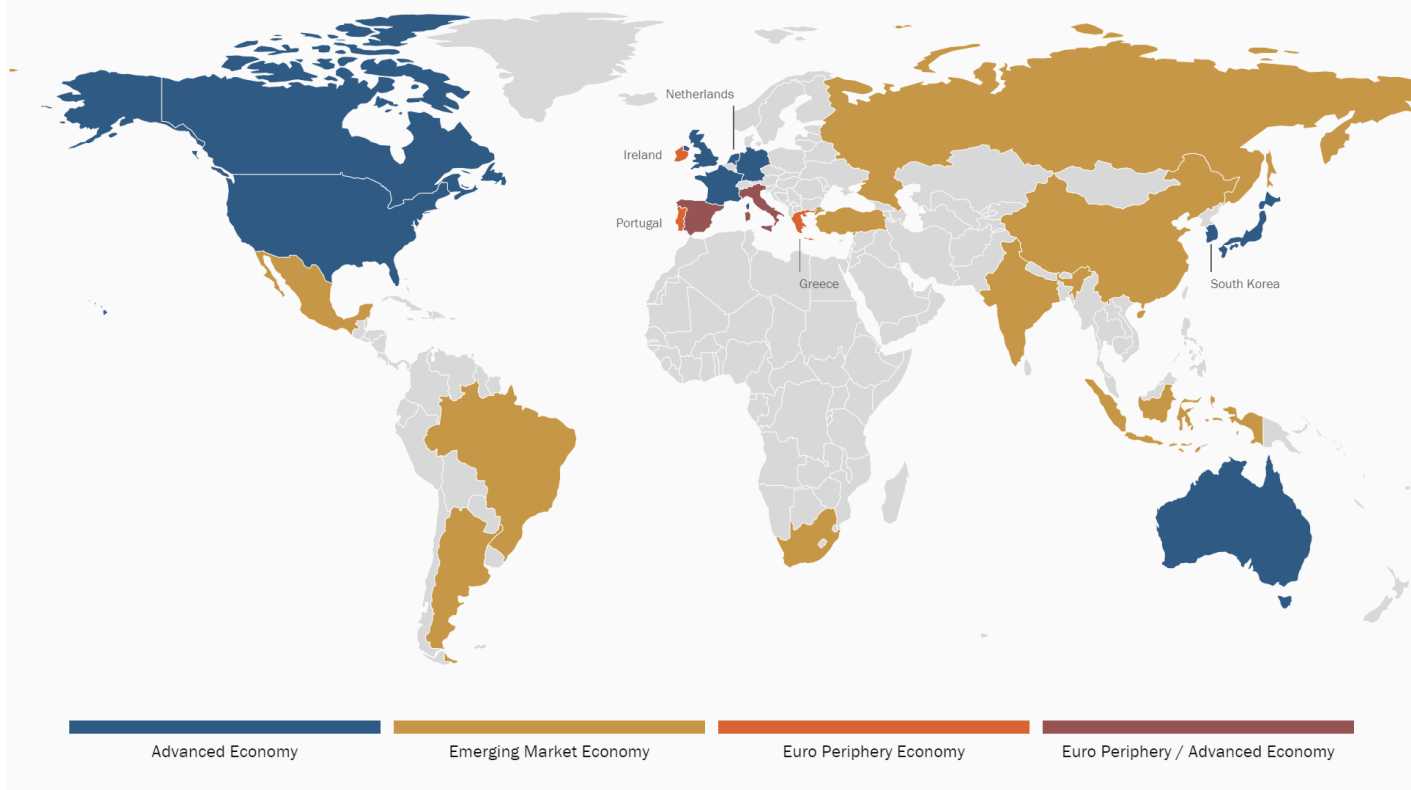
► [Learn more about the Venezuelan refugee crises](#)



Senior Fellow Joshua Meltzer has been examining the opportunities and risks of the global expansion of the internet, the spread of artificial intelligence (AI), and the increased use of data by businesses and consumers to transform international trade. He hosted the Forum for Cooperation on Artificial Intelligence, a series of high-level transatlantic AI dialogues with officials from the United States, EU, UK, Canada, Japan, Singapore, and Australia, as well as representatives from industry and academia, which have covered topics including AI risk, AI standards, AI innovation, and data for AI.

## The October 2020 TIGER Index found pockets of strength amid a rising second wave of COVID-19.

Senior Fellow Eswar Prasad, the New Century Chair in International Trade and Economics, published new editions of the Tracking Indexes for the Global Economic Recovery (TIGER), his biannual collaboration with the *Financial Times*, which has tracked global economic recovery for over a decade. The [October 2020 edition](#), published as the second wave of the coronavirus was gathering strength, found pockets of strength in particular economies, but doubtful prospects for a broad-based and robust recovery. The



[April 2021 TIGER Index](#) was released at a time when “vaccine euphoria” was being tempered by virus resurgence in some countries. This update found that the U.S. and China would likely drive global growth and that a strong and durable recovery depends on strong virus control efforts coupled with balanced monetary and fiscal stimulus to support demand and improve productivity.

► [Learn more about the TIGER Index](#)



## Accelerating growth and development in Africa

Foresight in Africa 2021 The Africa Growth Initiative (AGI) conducts research to help establish

long-term strategies for economic growth and development in Africa. AGI scholars draw on research, practical expertise, and convening power to develop effective solutions that maintain the momentum and broaden the benefits of growth in Africa.

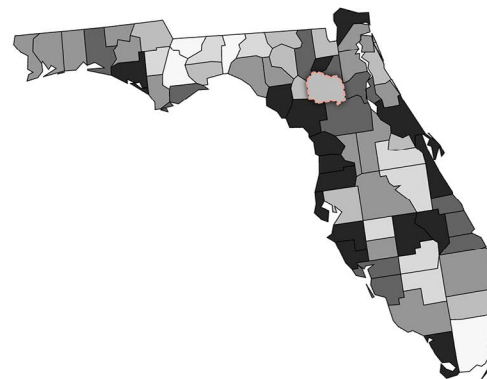
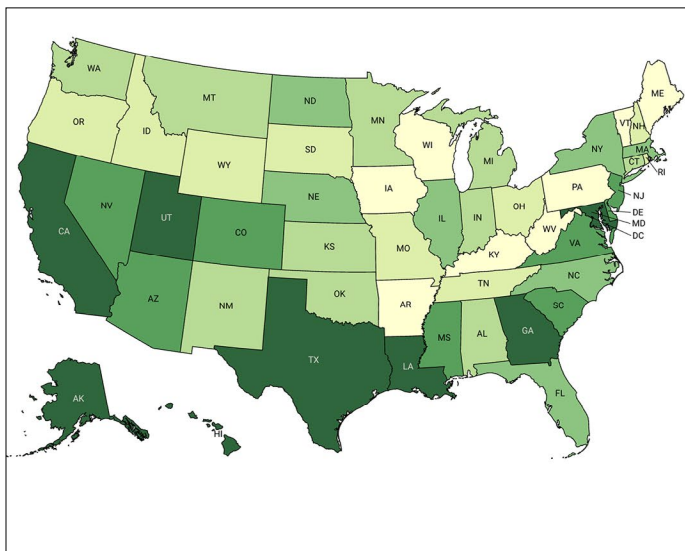
Aloysius Uche Ordu joined the Africa Growth Initiative as director and senior fellow after serving as a vice president at the African

Development Bank and a director at the World Bank Group. In March 2021, Ordu [testified at the hearing of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs](#) and provided policy guidance on elections in Africa, highlighting newfound continental solidarity, threats to democracy in Africa, and COVID’s impact on election integrity.

About 54 percent of the roughly \$18 billion in annual assistance that the International Development Association (IDA) has committed to the world’s 75 poorest countries over the last three years has gone to 39 countries in Africa. In preparation for the IDA-20 replenishment discussions, Ordu led a roundtable in which the executive directors representing the African constituencies at the World Bank Group discussed priorities—including digital infrastructure, climate change, gender, and job creation—and coordinated a unified African voice for securing robust replenishment.

AGI accelerated research into how “industries without smokestacks” (IWOSS)—sectors outside of traditional manufacturing—might increase employment opportunities for sub-Saharan Africa’s burgeoning youth population. These sectors, such as agribusiness and ICT-based business services, can absorb a large number of moderately skilled workers at decent wages and are poised for sustainable growth. Vice President and Director of Global Economy and Development Brahim S. Coulibaly co-authored [a report sharing deeper insights](#) on the IWOSS sector in Africa and recommendations on those sectors offering the greatest employment potential.

## Hope and desperation in the United States



	Household Mean Income	Poverty Rate	Unemployment Rate
State Average	\$59,434	19.1%	8.3%
County	\$62,056	24.0%	6.3%

### ► Learn more about interactive mapping

Leo Pasvolsky Senior Fellow Carol Graham released an interactive mapping tool that allows users to explore nationwide state- and county-level trends in markers such as hope and optimism, helping shed light on the links between well-being, ill-being, and economic opportunity. Based on this work, the City of Santa Monica implemented its first annual well-being survey, which was used to frame municipal policy priorities for several years. Graham chaired the Brookings Working Group on Despair and Economic Recovery, which published an [influential white paper](#) proposing a task force to monitor trends and coordinate federal and local efforts to combat despair.

## Informing change in global education

The Center for Universal Education (CUE) is a leading policy center focused on universal quality education and skills development around the world. CUE plays a critical role in promoting actionable strategies to equip all learners to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the learning of over 1.5 billion students. Scholars from across CUE quickly mobilized to produce guidance and research to help with the recovery efforts. CUE's research quantifying the costs of COVID-19 school closures was cited in congressional reports, such as one on balancing the costs of school closures against the health risks. CUE experts also developed an evidence-based tool for ministries of education to adopt and more successfully invest in education technology and published [a report on how education can emerge stronger from COVID-19](#). This led to the creation of a Brookings community schools task force in collaboration with the New York City Department of Education.



## World Bank-CUE Dialogue Series

With the World Bank, CUE continued its Dialogue Series, which brings together former heads of state—including former Mexican President Vicente Fox and former Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou—national education decision-makers, the donor community, and research and civil society organizations to learn from one another about COVID-19 education impacts and discuss protecting education investment.

## A sustainable path for humanity

Brookings formally launched the Center for Sustainable Development (CSD) in October 2020 to provide a dedicated home for Global scholars who are working to advance sustainable development priorities within and across all countries. The Center helped galvanize energy around its scholars' key contributions to this important goal.

To tackle climate change and COVID-19 recovery, the World Bank Group and IMF [launched a High-Level Advisory Group \(HLAG\) on Sustainable and Inclusive Recovery Growth](#) on June 15, which includes Senior Fellows Amar Bhattacharya and Homi Kharas as leading experts. They will lend their expertise and thought leadership to help identify the immediate challenges of a sustainable and inclusive recovery. Bhattacharya also published [a paper on resetting climate action](#) for the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action, a group of over 50 finance ministers of which he and Lord Nicholas Stern serve as advisors to the co-chairs, arguing that they have a unique opportunity to design and implement comprehensive stimulus packages that can drive strong recovery and build a better future. He engaged with senior leadership of the COP26 Presidency, the office of the UN Secretary General and the Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC, President Macron and his team on the One Planet Summit, and the IMF. Senior Fellow George Ingram laid out concrete proposals for short-term, incremental fixes and more ambitious, longer-term ways in which the U.S. development function can be strengthened and enhanced.

Over 200 global experts across the world responded to a survey on multilateralism led by Senior Fellow Kemal Derviş. A report [summarizing and analyzing the findings](#) found a strong belief in the importance of multilateralism for peace, prosperity, and resilience, and a consensus that the need for effective multilateralism has increased over the last two decades. The report comes at a time when the Biden administration has re-committed the U.S. to multilateral cooperation and multiple initiatives—notably efforts to cut emissions to combat climate change. With the grim economic outlook in developing countries, Senior Fellow Homi Kharas focused on financing for development, including how to address COVID-19's legacy of debt in developing countries. Kharas presented at the UN's Meeting of Heads of State and Government—convened by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness, and UN Secretary-General António Guterres—on development financing and debt challenges in the COVID-19 era. The Secretary-General's policy brief, "Liquidity and Debt Solutions to Invest in the SDGs: The Time to Act is Now," draws heavily from Kharas's recent [Brookings working paper on debt and development](#).

In the United States, Senior Fellow Marcela Escobari advised public officials in Colorado, Idaho, and Texas on developing



## **Toward Action on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

17 Rooms, a joint initiative of Brookings and the Rockefeller Foundation co-chaired by CSD Director John McArthur, went virtual in 2020 with more than 200 participants joining one of 17 working groups to identify opportunities for cooperative action on the 17 SDGs over the subsequent 12–18 months. Individual Room summary documents informed an overall insights report, [“Great Transitions: Doubling Down on the Sustainable Development Goals.”](#)

strategies for COVID-19 relief and recovery that support vulnerable workers and rebuild industries that provide employment and mobility. She also presented to the State Economic Development Executives (SEDE) Network—a group of more than 50 state economic development agency leaders—on policies to grow jobs and use job transitions data to help firms share workers and avoid layoffs.

Senior Fellow Tony Pipa convened the SDG Leadership Cities network, including a three-day virtual meeting with mayors and city leaders and a series of public conversations examining the role cities are playing on the front lines of the COVID-19 response. He also launched the [City Playbook for Advancing the SDGs](#), an ongoing series of how-to briefs by experienced city government leaders to disseminate innovations and accelerate the local delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Learn more about Global Economy and Development at [brookings.edu/program/global-economy-and-development/](https://brookings.edu/program/global-economy-and-development/) and follow @BrookingsGlobal**

# Ensuring an Effective and Equitable COVID-19 Recovery

As the COVID-19 pandemic persisted into a second year, Governance Studies (GS) experts continued to provide immediate, actionable solutions to aid recovery efforts across the nation. GS experts offered policy recommendations in an array of areas to address the racial inequities rooted in much of American society while also providing calm and thoughtful analysis at a time when the country was grappling with the aftermath of the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and others, and the post-election attacks at the Capitol. The pandemic also forced millions of Americans to work, learn, and socialize virtually, putting a strain on our broadband networks and highlighting the importance of closing the digital divide. GS scholars offered insights on how to best harness the power of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and offered solutions to bolster the strength and security of American democracy.

## Advancing Equity in COVID-19 Relief Efforts



### Examining and Addressing COVID-19 Racial Disparities in Detroit

David M. Rubenstein Fellow Rashawn Ray partnered with New Detroit—A Racial Justice Organization—to co-author a report highlighting the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Black Detroiters and outlining policies to close the racial gap in health outcomes.

► [Read the full report](#)

Understanding and addressing racial disparities in COVID-19 relief efforts were key themes in the work of Governance Studies. Senior Fellow and Director of the Race, Prosperity, and Inclusion Initiative Camille Busette [testified before Congress](#) to urge lawmakers to strengthen pandemic aid around communities of color and low-wage workers.

Publishing dozens of timely articles and analyses through its influential Chalkboard blog and regularly hosting informative webinars, the Brown Center on Education Policy served as a vital resource for students, parents, and school leaders who were navigating an unprecedented crisis in learning. The Center's work included a series on how to provide coronavirus relief funds to schools, evidence-based recommendations on school reopening decisions, studying the impact of COVID-19 on learning gaps, and more.

Once a COVID-19 vaccine was available, Governance Studies scholars concentrated on fostering an equitable, far-reaching distribution. Senior Fellows Elaine Kamarck and William Galston [closely monitored the vaccine rollout](#), identifying successful strategies and potential pitfalls. Nonresident Senior Fellow Gabriel R. Sanchez, now a David M. Rubenstein Fellow at Brookings, [examined](#) challenges for vaccine uptake among Latinos, a key obstacle to equitable dissemination, while Fellow Makada Henry-Nickie

[explained](#) why incentivizing entrepreneurship and startup growth is key to helping communities of color bounce back from the COVID-19 economic crisis.

While COVID-19 rates have decreased recently, the crisis is far from over. Governance Studies scholars stand ready to offer fact-based solutions to help America move forward.

## Navigating Unprecedented Challenges to the U.S. Election Process and Peaceful Transfer of Power

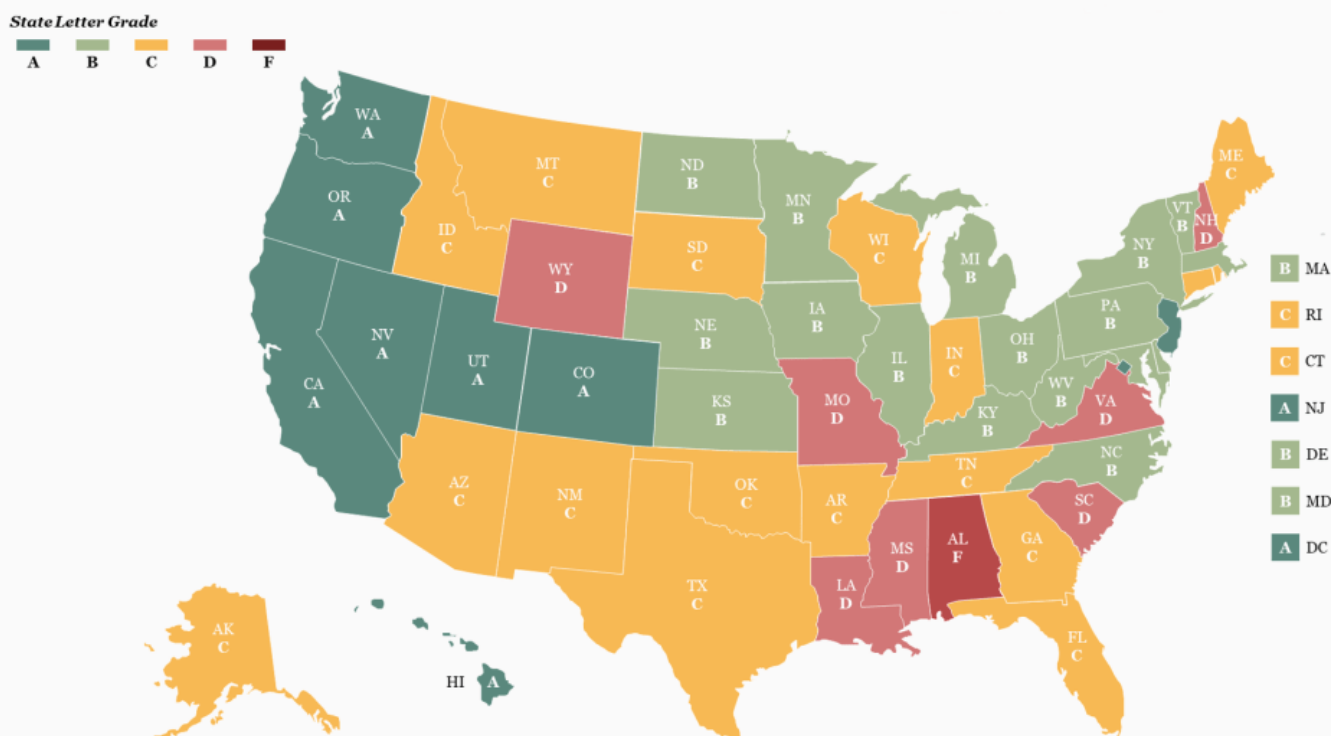
The 2020 race to the presidency was an arduous journey that began with a packed field of Democratic hopefuls and ended with a deadly insurrection at the United States Capitol. Through it all, Governance Studies scholars provided much-needed context and clarity in a time of rampant misinformation and widespread confusion as to how to carry out an election amid a global pandemic.

Brookings's [Center for Effective Public Management](#) provided thoughtful analyses on how the candidates and campaigns performed throughout the race, and what polls could tell us about American public opinion. With coronavirus cases on the rise

and a vaccine breakthrough still months away, scholars Elaine Kamarck, John Hudak, and Tom Wheeler discussed the virtual conventions, stripped-down debates, and how to get Americans to vote by mail—all while grappling with fears of election fraud and outside hacks. Rashawn Ray explained the importance of Black voters and why they were largely responsible for Joe Biden winning the presidency.

The country did not know the results of the election until days later when all the mail-in ballots were tabulated. Donald Trump began stoking the “Big Lie” that the 2020 election was stolen from him, a baseless accusation that would eventually lead to Trump supporters storming the Capitol in an effort to prevent Congress from finalizing the election results. In the uncertain weeks leading up to January 20, 2021, Senior Fellows Molly Reynolds and Sarah Binder played a significant role in helping the world understand some of the more complex congressional rules and procedures used to certify U.S. presidential elections and inaugurate a new president. On the [Lawfare blog](#), Senior Fellow Benjamin Wittes, Fellow Quinta Jurecic, and others discussed Capitol security, the legal ramifications of the riot, and how to ensure an event like that doesn’t happen again.

### Performance of U.S. States: Voting by Mail During a Pandemic



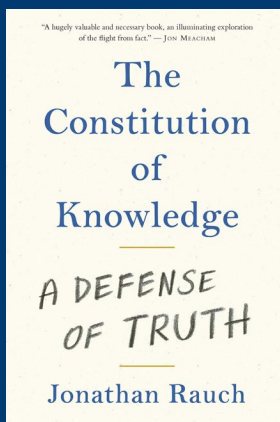
Source: “Voting by mail in a pandemic: A state-by-state scorecard” by Elaine Kamarck, Yousef Ibreak, Amanda Powers, and Chris Stewart

BROOKINGS

### Voting by mail in a pandemic: A state-by-state scorecard

A letter grade from A–F on how prepared each state is for vote-by-mail in a pandemic.

► [Learn more about vote-by-mail](#)



## Polarization: A Defense of Truth

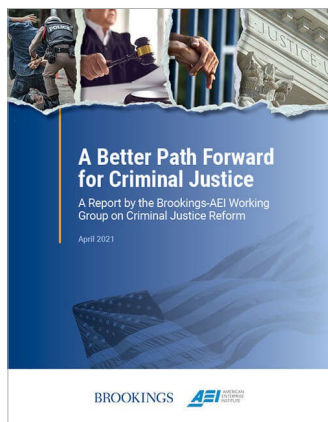
Indications are that polarization in the U.S. is at its worst since the Civil War. As Senior Fellow Jonathan Rauch outlined in his 2021 book, *The Constitution of Knowledge: A Defense of Truth*, the more polarized a society gets, the easier it is to manipulate people into hating the other side. Through falsehoods, trolling, conspiracies, and social media pile-ons, facilitated by new tech and exacerbated by the arrival of Donald Trump, Americans have been exposed to Russian-style disinformation on a massive scale. Rauch highlights the importance of the “constitution of knowledge” as the greatest social technology ever invented, transforming humans as a species. The constitution of knowledge is an important tool for turning disagreement into truth.

## Policing in America: Solutions for Safer, More Peaceful, and Resilient Communities

In May 2020, George Floyd’s death at the hands of the Minneapolis police and numerous events like it across America ignited a new urgency and momentum to the drive to reform the American criminal justice system. Having devoted over a decade to studying law enforcement policies and practices, speaking with police officers, policymakers, and civil rights advocates, and working to reduce police brutality incidents, David M. Rubenstein Fellow Rashawn Ray quickly became a go-to resource for policymakers, journalists, and the public. In widely cited Brookings publications, Ray [described](#) the impact of structural racism in law enforcement, arguing that “bad apples come from rotten trees,” and identified key reforms needed to enhance police accountability.

Unfortunately, the debate on police and criminal justice reform too often collapses into an unhelpful binary: “support the blue” or “abolish the police.” To help close the divide, Ray partnered with Brent

Orrell, a Senior Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), to establish the [Brookings-AEI working group on criminal justice reform](#). Together, they assembled a diverse coalition of academics and practitioners to identify meaningful, workable, bi-partisan policy solutions that will foster safer, more peaceful, and more resilient communities.



At a hearing before the House Committee on Education and Labor, Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-FL) cited data from the Brookings-AEI working group’s report in support of strengthening reentry support for formerly incarcerated individuals as a part of the reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity

Act. Ray continues to engage key policymakers, including Rep. Joyce Beatty, chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, Senators Corey Booker and Chris Murphy, and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, as well as local leaders such as Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott to advance the working group’s recommendations.

## Anticipating the Risks and Governance Challenges of Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technology

Artificial intelligence (AI) technology such as machine learning and data analytics is affecting all aspects of society including education, transportation, health care, and finance, yet regulations are not keeping pace. To provide fact-based information to policymakers and other key stakeholders, Vice President and Director Darrell West developed a range of content related to AI governance, and Director of the Center for Technology Innovation and Senior Fellow Nicol Turner Lee focused on the area of AI and bias. Brookings scholars and outside experts wrote a series of pieces and held events discussing AI-enabled disinformation, facial recognition, reducing bias in AI-based financial services, privacy and transparency, deep fakes, and issues related to algorithmic bias. They also proposed policy remedies to address the complex challenges associated with emerging technologies.

In addition, West and Brookings President John R. Allen co-authored the book [Turning Point: Policymaking in the Era of Artificial Intelligence](#), designed to discuss both the opportunities and risks posed by artificial intelligence— and how near-term policy decisions could determine whether the technology leads to utopia or dystopia. The book offers key recommendations for actions that governments, businesses, and individuals can take to promote trustworthy and responsible artificial intelligence, including creating ethical principles, strengthening government oversight, defining corporate culpability, establishing advisory boards at federal agencies, and taking proactive steps to address how artificial intelligence affects the workforce.

## TechTank Launches New Podcast

As part of outreach to multiple audiences, Governance Studies and Lawfare created the [TechTank Podcast](#), which featured a variety of conversations to explore consequential current technology issues. In one [notable episode](#), the father-daughter duo of House Majority Whip James Clyburn and former Federal Communications Commission Acting Chair and Commissioner Mignon Clyburn discussed the Accessible, Affordable Internet for All Act. The proposed legislation, helmed by Rep. Clyburn (D-S.C.) and Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.), proposes investing more than \$94 billion in infrastructure. The Clyburns and Senior Fellow Nicol Turner Lee discussed this new legislation and Turner Lee's proposed "Tech New Deal," which focuses on ensuring internet access from a viable broadband connection. Both Visiting Fellow Tom Wheeler and Turner Lee testified before Congress to provide their expertise on the importance of equitably expanding support for both broadband deployment and adoption in communities across America.



# Presidential Research Priorities Drive Impact on Critical Issues



Brookings President John R. Allen established the Presidential Research Priorities to bring the breadth and depth of the Institution's expertise to a set of challenges whose size and scope require a large-scale, multidisciplinary effort.

Each of the four Priorities—Race, Justice, and Equity; Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technology; the Future of the Global Middle Class; and American Leadership in the 21st Century—draws on the full range of Brookings's strengths in cutting-edge, independent research and unparalleled convening power. Support for the Presidential Research Priorities comes from the generous contributions of Brookings donors and allocations from the President's Special Initiatives Fund.

## Race, Justice, and Equity

Brookings's [newest Presidential Research Priority](#) was launched in 2020 amid the national reckoning over race galvanized by the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and so many other Black Americans. As the summer's Black Lives Matter protests brought renewed attention to the mutually reinforcing crises of economic inequality, inequities in criminal justice, and persistent, structural racism and bias, Brookings scholars are developing policy solutions to address both the root causes and the consequences.

Research by Senior Fellows Rashawn Ray, Camille Busette, director of the Race, Prosperity, and Inclusion Initiative at Brookings, and Fellow Makada Henry-Nickie focused on the much higher

rates of unemployment among African American men compared to their white or Latino peers, a key contributing factor in many of the downstream challenges facing African American families. Their analyses found little geographic deviation from these trends and a distinct lack of policy measures to address them. The next phases of this work will seek to identify global best practices and the potential and complexities of efforts to incentivize better employment outcomes, and to develop a set of actionable policy recommendations.

Senior Fellow Andre Perry's research on Black-owned [housing](#) and [businesses](#) has mobilized a new generation of leaders around an action-oriented agenda to embrace the assets critical to wealth creation and growth in Black communities across

the U.S. Perry's conversations with Rep. Gregory W. Meeks (D-N.Y.) led to the introduction of the Social and Economic Equity Promotion Act, a bill requiring analysis from the Congressional Budget Office of how legislative proposals would impact historically underserved communities, including communities of color and others that have experienced longstanding social and economic inequality.

Senior Fellow Rashawn Ray's work focuses on criminal justice and police reform and the disparate impacts of COVID-19 on Black and Latino Americans. Along with Brent Orrell of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), he co-led the Brookings-AEI Working Group on Criminal Justice Reform, which published [A Better Path Forward](#), a report outlining sustained, bi-partisan reforms to move the criminal justice system toward a more humane and effective footing. He also partnered with racial justice organization New Detroit to examine [COVID-19 racial disparities in the city](#). In a presentation to Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer's COVID-19 Task Force, he offered policy recommendations to improve health outcomes in communities of color. Ray's current work on police reform includes an assessment of changes to policies regarding policing practices and law enforcement accountability at the state and municipal level.

As director of the Center for Technology Innovation, Senior Fellow Nicol Turner Lee leads research on digital inequities and racial discrimination in autonomous systems. Her work on the digital divide focuses on how the [lack of broadband](#) contributes to the existing systemic racial inequalities impacting Black Americans and other people of color. Turner Lee has also presented her ongoing work on algorithmic bias to government, industry, and civil society organizations, including headlining a conference on K-12 digital access for the U.S. Department of Education and presenting a framework for [racial equity in antitrust](#) for the American Bar Association. She also published on the need to ensure racial equity in the forthcoming infrastructure workforce in the U.S. through her [Tech New Deal](#).

## Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technology Initiative

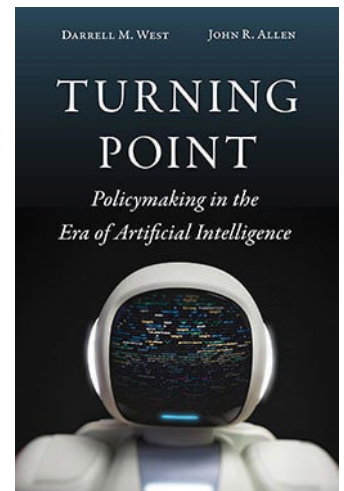
Under the leadership of President John R. Allen and Director of Research Chris Meserole, the Brookings Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Technology Initiative (AIET) has emerged as the premier high-impact platform for research and convening on AI and emerging technology policy. Only two years after the Initiative's launch, Brookings was ranked as the #1 think tank for AI policy and strategy by the University of Pennsylvania's Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program.

The experts leading the Initiative's AI Governance testified before the House Budget Committee, Energy and Commerce Committee and the Trade Subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee. Vice President and Director of Governance Studies Darrell West and Brookings President John R. Allen co-authored [Turning Point: Policymaking in the Era of Artificial Intelligence](#), which highlights opportunities and risks posed by artificial intelligence and how near-term policy decisions could determine whether the technology leads to utopia or dystopia. Through papers and the [TechTank blog](#) and [podcast series](#), Brookings experts examined key challenges around privacy, financial services, disinformation and social media, and cybersecurity. A new workstream on AI Regulation seeks to bridge the gap between the pace of change in technology and in regulation with commissioned papers and a new fireside chat series.

Brookings's [AI Bias workstream](#) examined the incorporation of algorithms and automation into important decision-making pipelines related to employment, credit, housing, and criminal justice in order to identify examples of racial and gender bias, as well as ways to mitigate them. This work included commissioned papers on bias in natural language processing and in criminal justice applications of AI and events on aspects of responsible AI and systemic racial inequality in AI.

[Brookings research](#) also laid the foundation for the "AI Hubs" proposal in the pending United States Innovation and Competition Act (USICA) legislation and informed the recent White House plan for investing in domestic semiconductor manufacturing capacity. Work by Brookings Metro included an initiative to engage community leaders to benchmark [Louisville, Kentucky's AI readiness](#) and how it can position itself to succeed in the artificial intelligence era, which can be a model for other midsize cities.

Brookings AIET experts on AI and National Security focused on responsible development and deployment of AI in the national security context. John R. Allen published [Future War and the Defence of Europe](#), which makes the case for innovative strategic public-private partnerships and lays out a vision for a technology-enabling defense that safeguards Europe's future. Brookings scholars red-teamed the reports and recommendations of the



congressionally mandated National Security Commission on artificial intelligence.

AIET also expanded its global reach. The Trustworthy AI workstream, initially a Track 1.5 dialogue focused on greater cooperation on AI policy between the United States and EU, and now known as the Forum for Cooperation on AI (FCAI), has extended its scope to include officials and experts from Asia and Australia. The FCAI has been so impactful that senior representatives from the European Commission refer to FCAI and its AI Dialogues as part of their international engagement strategy on AI.

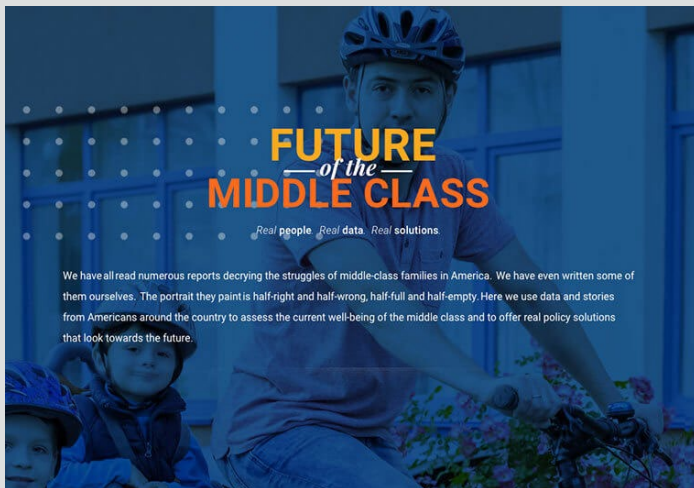
The Brookings-led U.S.-China Dialogue on AI Security has helped to lower concerns in Beijing and Washington about an “AI Arms Race,” with Brookings’s Chinese counterparts publicly recognizing both the limitations of modern AI and the risks posed by AI-enabled military applications. Brookings also convened the High-Level Transatlantic Working Group on Disinformation and Emerging Technology, which brought together leading government officials, researchers, and technologists from North America and Europe to address the threat of coordinated disinformation campaigns targeting democratic societies on both sides of the Atlantic.

Looking ahead, the Initiative has launched the [Brookings Global Forum on Democracy and Technology](#). Led by Brookings President John R. Allen, the Global Forum will consist of nine new workstreams on key questions of global technology policy, as well as both a major public virtual event and a High-Level Dialogue in late 2021.

## Future of the Global Middle Class

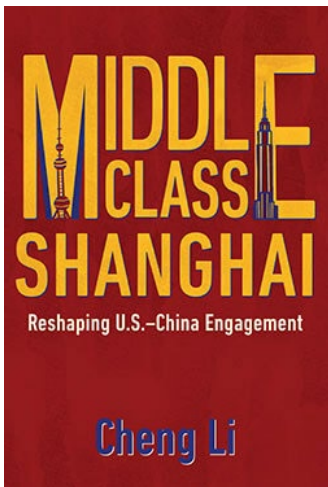
Even before COVID-19 brought ordinary life to a sudden halt in early 2020, the American middle class was facing severe challenges of rising income inequality, geographic disparities, racial differences, and access to quality education, health care, and affordable housing. The pandemic exacerbated these challenges and widened the gulf between those who did the essential, in-person work that enabled so many white collar workers to shift to remote work. Even as pandemic-driven restrictions ease in many places, the stark divisions by race, social class, and economic status remain, and mobility remains difficult. Brookings experts are working to understand the barriers and develop policies to improve the quality of America’s middle class and raise the number of people rising to join its ranks.

[The Future of the Middle Class Initiative](#), which launched a new interactive presence on the Brookings website, uses data and stories from around the country to assess the current well-being of the middle class and to offer real policy solutions that look towards the future. The centerpiece of the Initiative this year was the release of [A New Contract with the Middle Class](#), by Senior Fellows Isabel Sawhill and Richard Reeves, director of the Initiative and co-director of the Center on Children and Families. The Contract, which outlines a pathway to a better future for individuals willing to work and contribute, is rooted in the three key principles of partnership that balances personal responsibility with support, prevention that avoids the costs and consequences of earlier failures, and pluralism of opinions, approaches, and goals.



► [Learn more about the American Middle Class](#)

As part of this effort, Reeves and Sawhill examine five core ingredients in a good quality of life—money, time, relationships, health, and respect—and sketch policy ideas to make them more universally accessible. The Initiative’s [Middle Class Monitor](#) provides data across 12 metrics within these five domains that answer the overarching question of how the middle class is faring. Going beyond the data, [Voices of the Middle Class](#) tells the larger story of everyday life for these Americans. Scholars across Brookings, along with outside experts, contribute their work on factors that both inhibit and promote the economic mobility of the middle class through the [Middle Class Memos](#). This year’s Memos looked at tax policies affecting the middle class, racial disparities in employment, the gender gap in high school graduation, and the impacts of the pandemic across a range of measures.



Internationally, the growth of the Chinese middle class has important implications for the global middle class. In a report for Brookings's Global China initiative, Senior Fellow Homi Kharas explores questions of the impact of this growth on the planet and potential implications for global politics, including democracy. [The report](#) concludes that the sheer size of the Chinese middle class suggests that it will have an enduring influence on

consumer, employment, and political preferences. Senior Fellow and Director of the John L. Thornton China Center Cheng Li published [Middle Class Shanghai](#), an examination of the dynamism and diversity of contemporary Chinese society and its potential impact on U.S.-China engagement.

## American Leadership in the 21st Century

American Leadership in the 21st Century focuses first and foremost on how the United States engages with the world through the shared values that are at the nation's core. Brookings's research and convening supports human rights, the rule of law, and the global community of democracies, all of which are essential to a peaceful world of shared prosperity. Following a period of increasingly frayed international alliances and straying from global norms, national leaders are renewing efforts to reinvigorate relationships and restore the rules-based international order. Even in the absence of leadership at the national level, policymakers, civil society, and the private sector have been working at the state and local level to advance American leadership through their own interactions with global actors.

There is no shortage of areas where American leadership can contribute to positive global outcomes, from the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals to climate change to U.S.-China technology competition to Middle East peace, and more. Brookings experts are advancing smart analysis and innovative solutions to inform and support values-based multilateralism and improve the U.S.'s approach to these and other critical issues.

One key example of this work is Senior Fellow Tony Pipa's ongoing research on local community contributions to the Sustain-

able Development Goals (SDGs). Brookings joined with the UN Foundation to host the third annual event on [American Leadership in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals](#). This year's edition featured elected officials and leaders from philanthropy, business, and universities from Phoenix, Chicago, Orlando, and San Diego, whose new commitments and innovations on the SDGs embody the extent to which these global goals are rooted in American values and priorities.

On climate change, Fellow Samantha Gross, director of the Climate and Energy Initiative, published a series of reports on how to decarbonize the most challenging sectors of the economy, including [heavy transportation](#) and [heavy industry](#). Her work explores the specific reasons why fossil fuels are central to these sectors and the potential solutions—with the United States at the lead—to overcome these challenges.

Global China, the signature effort on that country from the Brookings Foreign Policy program, devoted significant work to the question of China's technological ambitions. The project's [capstone publication](#) included several pieces on aspects of this critical issue, including 5G, surveillance technology, and chip manufacturing capabilities in the context of the long-term competition over how technology will serve as a tool in the competition over democratic values. Brookings has convened a number of dialogues with Chinese counterparts to foster candid discussion around artificial intelligence and other key technologies that can, depending on their use, serve constructive or malign ends.

American leadership has long played a central role in the pursuit of Middle East peace. After more than a decade of trying to reduce its military footprint in the region and wind down the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States nonetheless seeks to protect its interests. Then-Senior Fellow Tamara Cofman Wittes, who has been nominated by President Biden to be assistant administrator for the Middle East at USAID, argues in "[What to do—and what not to do—in the Middle East](#)," part of Brookings's institution-wide [Blueprints for American Renewal & Prosperity](#), for the United States to rebuild its diplomatic tools, clarify security commitments, and review its military presence in the Persian Gulf to promote peace and stability in the region.

Through the research and analysis supported by this priority, Brookings hopes to support the health and security of both America and the democratic world for many decades to come.

# Innovative Ideas to Meet the Nation's Biggest Challenges

Brookings launched the *Blueprints for American Renewal & Prosperity* in December 2020 to provide Congress and the new presidential administration with innovative ideas to meet the many challenges facing the country. The *Blueprints* were released at a time when the nation was struggling with the still-surging global pandemic and its resulting recession, and at the same time it was confronting its history of racial injustice and inequality. The scale and scope of these issues require big ideas for the nation and world to emerge from crisis stronger, more equitable, and more resilient. Through the *Blueprints*, Brookings delivered innovative solutions to meet the gravity of the moment, just as we have for more than 100 years.

Published to coincide with key inflection points during the presidential transition and early in the Biden administration, Brookings published over 40 signature policy briefs on economic growth and dynamism, racial justice and worker mobility, domestic and international governance, international security, and climate and resilience. Through corresponding events and podcasts, amplified across all Brookings communication channels, the *Blueprints* informed policy discussions on the most critical issues affecting lives and livelihoods.



## Racial Justice and Worker Mobility

The effects of the pandemic were felt unevenly across populations, throwing into stark relief a number of acute and chronic problems facing our nation's vulnerable workers and communities of color. Brookings published seven *Blueprints* proposing federal policies to help workers navigate a turbulent economy, narrow wealth gaps, and promote better health for all Americans.

- [Desegregating work and learning through 'earn-and-learn' models](#)
- [National service can connect America's young people to opportunity and community—and promote work of real social value](#)
- [Achieving an equitable national health system for America](#)
- [Promote health equity by taxing sugary drinks and doubling support for community health centers](#)
- [Rethinking homeownership incentives to improve household financial security and shrink the racial wealth gap](#)
- [How a new Minority Business Accelerator grant program can close the racial entrepreneurship gap](#)
- [Closing the racial wealth gap requires heavy, progressive taxation of wealth](#)

## Economic Growth and Dynamism

The pandemic set off a recession that demanded swift and decisive action to generate economic growth and dynamism. Brookings put forth policy solutions in six *Blueprints* aimed at countering the pandemic, reviving the economy, increasing opportunity, and reducing inequality to promote resilience and recovery.

- [How to boost long-run growth after COVID-19](#)
- [Democratizing innovation: Putting technology to work for inclusive growth](#)
- [Enhancing the liquidity of U.S. Treasury markets under stress](#)
- [Economic relief and stimulus: Good progress but more work to do](#)
- [Using automatic stabilization programs to fight recessions and speed recoveries](#)
- [A post-COVID plan for the middle class: Tax wealth not work and provide scholarships for service](#)

## International Security

In addition to the many challenges posed by the pandemic at home, the United States faces a volatile and uncertain international environment. Brookings published eight *Blueprints* offering concrete ideas for managing the challenges posed by China's rise, retooling U.S. alliances in Europe and Asia, rightsizing America's role in the Middle East, and addressing a range of transnational threats, including pandemic prevention, nonproliferation, and countering extremism through education, as well as bolstering democracy around the world.

- [The other 4+1: Biological, nuclear, climatic, digital, and internal dangers](#)
- [Getting the China challenge right](#)
- [Preventing pandemics through biodiversity conservation and smart wildlife trade regulation](#)
- [What to do—and what not to do—in the Middle East](#)
- [Retooling America's alliances to manage the China challenge](#)
- [Revitalizing nonproliferation cooperation with Russia and China](#)
- [Bolstering democracies in a changing international order: The case for democratic multilateralism](#)
- [A global effort to counter extremism through education](#)

## Governance

The federal response to the pandemic underscored the importance of well-functioning, responsive governing institutions. In a series of eleven *Blueprints*, Brookings advanced innovative ideas for making government work better and more efficiently to manage current problems and those yet to come.

- [Building an agile government for an era of megachange](#)
- [How a new National Recovery Investment Corps can drive a bottom-up, inclusive economic recovery](#)
- [America's crisis of despair: A federal task force for economic recovery and societal well-being](#)
- [Harnessing private capital and tying funding to results to build back better](#)
- [A blueprint for technology governance in the post-pandemic world](#)
- [Strengthening international cooperation on artificial intelligence](#)
- [Making Congress a better place to work](#)
- [It is time to restore the US Office of Technology Assessment](#)
- [A focused federal agency is necessary to oversee Big Tech](#)
- [Partnership among cities, states, and the federal government: Creating an office of subnational diplomacy at the US Department of State](#)
- [Making USAID a premier development agency](#)

## Climate and Resilience

The climate crisis represents one of the greatest threats to the world, and addressing its causes and mitigating its effects are urgent. Brookings's five climate and resilience *Blueprints* proposed innovative ideas for reducing risk, incentivizing resilience, and engaging with the global community through actionable domestic and international policies.

- [How Biden and Congress can use COVID-related corporate stimulus to boost climate resilience](#)
- [Empowering the U.S Global Change Research Program to further climate education and training](#)
- [How a federal Climate Planning Unit can manage built environment risks and costs](#)
- [Small Business Green Recovery Fund to power U.S climate transition](#)
- [How the United States can return to credible climate leadership](#)

# Second Cohort of Rubenstein Fellows Enriches Brookings Scholarship

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“The David M. Rubenstein Fellowship has been nothing short of transformational for our institution. From the way in which these phenomenal leaders have expanded our perspectives and insights to the tremendous depth and ingenuity of their individual scholarship, one would be hard pressed to find a more impactful program at Brookings.”

— John R. Allen, President

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The David M. Rubenstein Fellowship program brings emerging scholars to Brookings for two-year residencies that ground their research in policy and build their expertise. Throughout their Fellowships, these outstanding scholars participated in public and private events and produced papers, reports, blog posts, and other research outputs. They engaged with key stakeholders through briefings and testimony to inform policymakers and achieve impact on the policy debate.

The experience of the second cohort of Rubenstein Fellows, who completed their tenure at Brookings in

2021, was marked by the COVID-19 pandemic that began just a few months into their time. While the pandemic upended every aspect of life globally, it had a profound effect on the Fellow’s experience and their research. Many of them explored the varied impacts of the pandemic on society in the United States and across the world. Others focused on topics like police reform, artificial intelligence, workforce training, illicit financial flows and corruption, Pakistan and Afghanistan, extremism, defense and security, and climate change.

## Economic Studies



**Sarah Reber** is an associate professor of public policy at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs. Her research focuses on school desegregation, elementary and secondary [education finance policy](#), and college access. During her Fellowship, she co-authored a series of blogs outlining and exploring the [tradeoffs Congress must weigh](#) when choosing how to best support students during the COVID-19 crisis and support the economic recovery, which attracted attention from the staff of Senator Michael Bennet (D-Colo.). She also did important work on [how the pandemic is affecting different populations](#). Her research was featured prominently in the media, including in the *Washington Post*, *ABC News*, *MarketWatch*, *Politico*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. At the conclusion of her Fellowship, Sarah will continue her work with Brookings as a nonresident fellow.



**Mallika Thomas** is a professor of economics at Cornell University whose research focuses on the causes of persistent wage inequality and the consequences of policy responses. As a Rubenstein Fellow, she published work on [unemployment insurance](#) and [benefits](#) in the context of the pandemic. Her current work is focused on using job openings data and questions related to worker's thoughts on the safety of returning to work to provide insight into the pace of the recovery. Following her Fellowship, Mallika will continue the long Brookings tradition of public service by joining the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, where she has accepted a position of visiting scholar and senior economist in the Opportunity and Inclusive Growth Institute.

## Foreign Policy



**Madiha Afzal** is a fellow at the Center for Economic Research in Pakistan and Institute for Economic and Development Alternatives in Pakistan. Her research lies at the intersection of political economy, development, and security, with a focus on Pakistan. She has briefed many policymakers in Washington and around the world and has addressed numerous influential audiences. Her analysis of [Pakistan's domestic and foreign policy](#) has been published in a number of prestigious and high-profile media outlets, including *Foreign Affairs* and the *Washington Post*, and she was interviewed by prominent news agencies like *BBC*, *Bloomberg*, and the *Financial Times*. At the conclusion of her Rubenstein Fellowship, Madiha will remain at Brookings as a resident fellow with a principal focus on the Middle East a decade after the 2011 upheaval and [China's expanded ties to transnational criminal activity around the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor](#).



**Lindsey Ford** focused her research as a Rubenstein Fellow on [U.S. defense strategy in the Asia-Pacific region](#), including [U.S. security alliances](#), [military posture](#), and the [regional security architecture](#). She was a frequent commentator on Asian security and defense issues in outlets including the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, *Politico*, and *Foreign Policy*. Lindsey briefed policymakers and other key stakeholders in Washington and around the world on her work, including officials at the U.S. Department of Defense and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command; the Thai, South Korean, and Japanese Embassies and the Taiwan Economic and Cultural Representative Office; and Singapore's Ministry of Defence, including the Deputy Secretary (Policy). While serving as a Rubenstein Fellow, she was selected as deputy assistant secretary of defense for South and South East Asia, serving as the principal advisor to senior Department of Defense leadership on all policy matters related to the development and implementation of defense strategies and plans for the region.

## Global Economy and Development



**Addisu Lashitew** holds teaching and research affiliations with the African Economic Research Consortium in Nairobi and the School of Commerce of Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia. He focused much of his Fellowship on studying the immediate effects and long-term implications of the growing pandemic, collaborating with colleagues from around the world to write papers on [the effects of lockdown policies on international trade flows](#) from developing countries and on the impact of the pandemic on the performance of women entrepreneurs around the world. He also wrote extensively on the policy and institutional reforms required to advance the Sustainable Development Goals. Through the Africa Growth Initiative, he provided policy insights to the National Intelligence Council on the implications of disruptive digital technologies for economic growth in Africa. Upon the completion of his Fellowship, Addisu will pursue a career in academia as an assistant professor at the DeGroote School of Business of McMaster University.



**Matthew Collin** is a former World Bank economist whose research aims to understand the costs and benefits of policies aimed at reducing [illicit financial flows](#), including [money laundering](#) and cross-border tax evasion. As a Rubenstein Fellow, he used [leaked data](#) to start unpacking what has been happening in tax havens during a time of great tumult and shifts in policy. Matthew appeared on PRI's "The World" to discuss his [work on corruption and complicity in international banking](#), explaining the implications of the FinCEN Files leak and scandal. His blog post "[Angola and the Money Laundering Paradox](#)" was discussed widely in the anti-money laundering community and was cited in background research for the FACTI Panel, the UN-housed High-Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency, and Integrity. Upon the completion of his Fellowship, Matt is returning to the World Bank and may retain a non-resident affiliation with Brookings.

## Governance Studies



**Rashawn Ray** is executive director of the Lab for Applied Social Science Research (LASSR) at the University of Maryland. His scholarship informed national conversations on topics such as [police reform](#), [white supremacy](#), [reparations](#), and [the racial gap in COVID-19 health outcomes](#). His work has been cited by top-tier media outlets, including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and NPR, among others. He also serves as co-managing editor of Brookings's How We Rise blog. Rashawn partnered with the American Enterprise Institute to establish the Brookings-AEI working group on criminal justice reform, which published "[A better path forward for criminal justice reform](#)." He assembled a team of national, state, and local policy experts, practitioners, and researchers to better understand the factors driving the [racial disparities in COVID-19 health outcomes in Detroit](#) and was one of the first scholars to [identify prisons as a key source for COVID-19 community spread](#). Upon the conclusion of his Fellowship, Rashawn will remain at Brookings as a senior fellow, where he will continue his work on racial inequity and social mobility.

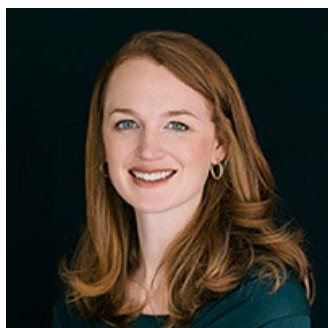


**Alex Engler** is an adjunct professor of data science and visualization and affiliated scholar at Georgetown's McCourt School of Public Policy. As a Rubenstein Fellow, he became a go-to resource for journalists and policymakers seeking scholarship and analysis on the [implications of artificial intelligence and emerging data technologies on society and governance](#). He published several popular reports as well as numerous pieces for Brookings's [TechTank](#) and [Lawfare](#) blogs. Alex's research and analysis appeared in the *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, and NPR, among other outlets. He co-led seven events for Brookings's Track 1.5 dialogue on international AI policy, which included governmental representatives from the US, EU, UK, Canada, Japan, Australia, and Singapore. Alex won the Fulbright-Schuman Innovation Award, a fellowship during which he will help implement the new Master of Data Science for Public Policy at the Hertie School in Berlin and then study the EU's artificial intelligence regulation at the Center for European Policy Studies in Brussels. He will then return to Brookings as a fellow to continue his work on AI oversight and international AI governance.

## Brookings Metro



**Annelies Goger** is an economic geographer focused on developing innovative policy solutions to address rising inequality and increase access to economic opportunity. During her Fellowship, she provided expert advice to Members of Congress and House committees on a pilot program for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and on Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act reauthorization. She also made recommendations to government leadership regarding [workforce](#) and economic development policy in response to the COVID-19 recession and Trade Adjustment Assistance and has advised Senators on quality assurance for online training, [employer engagement](#), WIOA reauthorization, unemployment insurance, work share, and wage records. She participated in several expert panels, networks, and task forces organized by government, academia, and the private sector. She also engaged with industry and civil society groups, presenting research on how automation and AI are affecting employer skill needs and talent pipelines. Upon the completion of her Fellowship, Annelies will remain at Brookings as a fellow in Brookings Metro.



**Molly Kinder** is a former nonresident senior fellow at New America and director of research for its Work, Workers & Technology initiative. Her “[Windfall Profits](#)” report was hugely influential, leading many of the least generous large retail companies to announce new hazard pay bonuses and informing hazard pay mandates passed in many of the largest cities on the west coast. “Windfall Profits” was covered by many major news outlets, including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, BBC, CNN, NBC, CBS, CNBC, *USA Today*, *The Hill*, *The Guardian*, *Business Insider*, *Time Magazine*, *NYMag*, and Yahoo Finance, as well as various local newspapers across the country. Since the start of the Biden administration, staff from the White House NEC, Council on Economic Advisers, and the Vice President’s office have reached out about her work on [essential workers](#) to inform briefings to the Vice President and public remarks, and she continues to make recommendation for state and local governments to leverage federal aid for hazard pay. Upon completion of her Fellowship, Molly will remain at Brookings as a fellow in Brookings Metro.

## Brookings Welcomes the Third Cohort of David M. Rubenstein Fellows

Brookings is pleased to welcome the [third class of the David M. Rubenstein Fellows](#) for two-year residencies. The ten new Fellows will conduct research and analysis, bringing fresh, diverse thinking to the Institution and advancing innovative scholarship on critical policy issues.

The 2021–23 Rubenstein Fellows are:

**Belinda Archibong**

Global Economy and Development

**Patricia Kim**

Foreign Policy

**Amy Nelson**

Foreign Policy

**Danielle Resnick**

Global Economy and Development

**Tonantzin Carmona**

Brookings Metro

**Anton Korinek**

Economic Studies

**Gabriel Sanchez**

Governance Studies

**Keon Gilbert**

Governance Studies

**Carlos Martin**

Brookings Metro

**Tara Watson**

Economic Studies

Learn more about the David M. Rubenstein Fellows at [brookings.edu/david-m-rubenstein-fellowship-program/](https://brookings.edu/david-m-rubenstein-fellowship-program/)

# Resources for Independent Research

The work of Brookings scholars is made possible by the generous support of a wide range of donors—individuals, corporations, foundations, governments, and other organizations—who share the Institution’s commitment to fact-based research that leads to new ideas for solving problems facing society at the local, national, and global level.

Whether they are supporting specific research projects or making unrestricted—or “core needs”—contributions to the Institution, they recognize that the value and impact of our research is firmly rooted in our scholars’ independence. Stakeholders in government, the private sector, civil society, the media, and the public know that Brookings is never seeking partisan advantage or advancing any agenda beyond the common good. Brookings is grateful for their support and engagement.

## Brookings Council and Robert S. Brookings Society Provide Opportunities for Engagement

The Brookings Council comprises individual and corporate donors who make gifts of unrestricted funds toward Brookings’s mission. These contributions provide essential resources that advance Brookings research and help ensure that our scholars have the communication platforms, information technology, and other tools to achieve impact on policy. The Council’s gifts allow Brookings to invest in a robust infrastructure, maintain sound Institutional oversight, and advance new research priorities.

The Robert S. Brookings Society provides emerging business and community leaders with avenues to engage with independent policy research. The Society brings together like-minded individuals for in-depth discussions on pressing policy issues that help them build knowledge and develop valuable relationships with their peers. In addition to providing great exposure to the work of Brookings experts, the Society nurtures the next generation of philanthropists. The important work Brookings does to strengthen governance relies on a culture of giving and civic involvement to succeed, and the Institution is proud to foster a spirit of generosity that will benefit the nation and the world for years to come.

The backbone of the annual Council and Society program is a series of scholar briefings that connect these supporters with research and analysis on pressing issues through presentations, panel discussions, roundtables, and other formats that encourage conversation and exchange of ideas and perspectives.

This year, monthly virtual events included conversations on the pandemic, criminal justice reform, Supreme Court nominations, the Middle East, the middle class, the national debt, and more. Featured participants included policymakers, journalists, and Brookings experts. The Brookings Council and Society are also invited to participate in select Board of Trustees and International Advisory Council programs, providing additional opportunities to engage with Brookings scholarship.

With pandemic-driven protocols shifting these interactions entirely online since March 2020, the Council and Society gained access to a wider array of opportunities to engage, without the constraints of geography or the commitment of travel. Brookings looks forward to reopening our doors to visitors and convening events across the country as soon as health conditions allow.

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**“I admire Brookings for its increasingly audacious mission and contributions toward making the world a better place. Having long outgrown its role as a mere ‘think tank,’ Brookings is a leading voice whose dedication to independence and quality make it uniquely credible and capable of transcending the hyper-partisan landscape.”**

— Heath Gray, Brookings Society

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## Council and Society Summit Returns to Assess the First 100 Days of the Biden Administration

The Council and Society calendar was highlighted by the annual Summit, which, after a pause in spring 2020 as the pandemic was spreading, returned in a virtual format. Organized around an evaluation of President Biden's first 100 days in office, the Summit was hosted by Brookings President John R. Allen.

Vice President and Director of Governance Studies Darrell West and Senior Fellow and Director of the Race, Prosperity, and Inclusion Initiative Camille Busette began the proceedings with an interactive assessment of the administration that invited participants to provide their own grades. The Summit featured panels of leading Brookings experts discussing economic growth and dynamism and climate and resilience. The Summit concluded with breakout sessions that provided space for the Council and Society to connect and reflect on the day's conversations.

## Board of Trustees Provides Leadership and Support

The Board of Trustees provides critical leadership for Brookings through fiduciary oversight and ensuring the Institution's integrity, financial health, and scholarly independence. The Brookings Board is deeply engaged with our scholars' research through opportunities to participate in substantive policy conversations as panelists and moderators. Trustees chair and are members of each of the five Program Leadership Councils that support the research programs and help advance their impact.

Brookings Trustees are generous donors to Brookings, contributing a major share of the Institution's core needs funding on an annual basis. The sustained financial support of the Board has been instrumental to the Institution's continued strong fiscal position throughout the pandemic, when the demand for Brookings's research, analysis, and policy prescriptions have never been greater. Trustees also make important investments in key initiatives and Presidential Research Priorities, giving scholars critical flexible funds to engage in long-term efforts on the most pressing policy issues. Brookings is grateful for the support and leadership of the Board, which make what we do possible.



*"I'm honored to invest in the future of Brookings as its scholarly work serves global leaders grappling with the creation and sustainment of a desirable quality of life for all of humanity."*

– **Art Collins**,  
Brookings Trustee and Vice Chair of the Board



*"As a Brookings Trustee, I am proud to be part of an organization that rapidly responded to the challenges of a polarized nation and a global pandemic by providing evidence-based policy solutions to improve the domestic and international landscapes."*

– **Leonard Schaeffer**,  
Brookings Trustee and Vice Chair of the Board



*"The Brookings Metro program has the unique ability to identify a policy opportunity, interrogate it at a local level among a wide variety of constituencies. I can think of no other group in the world of urban issues as trusted by so many stake holders across a variety of geographies, sectors, and levels of government."*

– **Cheryl Cohen Efron**,  
Brookings Trustee and Treasurer



*"In a world seeking truth and leadership, the depth and quality of Brookings's global expertise and solutions-oriented ideas have never been more relevant or necessary."*

– **Tracy Wolstencroft**,  
Brookings Trustee and Secretary of the Board

## Transformative Gift from Trustee Phil Knight Establishes the Strobe Talbott Center on Security, Strategy, and Technology and the Philip H. Knight Chair in Defense and Strategy

Trustee Phil Knight made a major gift to the Foreign Policy program to endow the new Philip H. Knight Chair in Defense and Strategy and to provide five years of support for the Center on Security, Strategy, and Technology.

The inaugural holder of the Knight Chair will be Senior Fellow and Director of Research in Foreign Policy Michael O'Hanlon. The Center will be renamed the Strobe Talbott Center on Security, Strategy, and Technology, in honor of the Brookings's former president and in recognition of Strobe Talbott's notable contributions to Brookings and to American foreign policy over

a long career in journalism, public service, and academia. The resources provided by this gift will enable Brookings to continue to achieve real impact on critical enduring and emerging national security issues.

This generous gift builds on previous support that Phil Knight has given to Brookings, including endowing the Philip Knight Chair in Japan Studies, which is held by Senior Fellow Mireya Solís. He has also provided critical resources for Brookings's work on climate issues and supported Strobe Talbott's scholarship in writing *Our Founders' Warning*, which was published in 2020.



**Phil Knight**  
Brookings Trustee

## Brookings Welcomes Eleven New Trustees

The Brookings Institution elected eleven new members to its Board of Trustees in the 2021 fiscal year. These new Trustees join a distinguished group of community leaders from the public and private sector. The Board of Trustees meets three times annually and protects the Institution's reputation, safeguards its independent scholarship, and provides fiduciary oversight. Brookings warmly welcomes the newest members to the Board of Trustees.



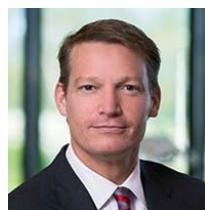
**Jeffrey L. Bewkes**  
Former Chairman and CEO  
Time Warner Inc.



**David Bozeman**  
VP for Amazon  
Transportation Services  
Amazon



**Cheryl Crazy Bull**  
President and CEO  
American Indian  
College Fund



**Kevin Mandia**  
CEO  
FireEye



**Beth E. Mooney**  
Retired Chairman and CEO  
KeyCorp



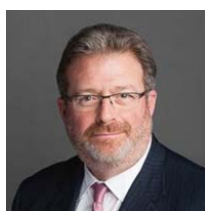
**Oscar Munoz**  
Executive Chairman & Chief Executive Officer, Retired  
United Airlines



**Ginni Rometty**  
Former Chairman, President & CEO  
IBM



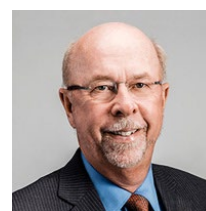
**Timothy F. Ryan**  
U.S. Chair and Senior Partner  
PwC



**James C. Smith**  
Chairman  
Thomson Reuters Foundation



**Kevin Snader**  
Co-President, Asian Pacific  
Ex-Japan  
Goldman, Sachs & Co.



**Douglas M. Steenland**  
Retired CEO  
Northwest Airlines, Inc.

## In Memoriam



### Louis W. Cabot

Louis Cabot served on the Brookings Board of Trustees for 59 years including eight years as chair. He was a strong advocate for Brookings and remained engaged with the Institution's work as an Honorary and later Lifetime Trustee. During his time as

chair of the Board, his family established the first endowed chair at Brookings, the Cabot Family Chair, creating an enduring legacy of support for outstanding scholarship. Louis served as chairman of Cabot-Wellington LLC and as a trustee of the Virginia W. Cabot Foundation and the Cabot Family Trust. In addition to serving on numerous corporate boards over his long career, he also was a trustee and member of the executive committee of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and a trustee of Northeastern University, Conservation International, and the Boston Museum of Science. He was an honorary life member of the Corporation of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and served on the Harvard Board of Overseers. He was a fellow and former chairman of the American Academy of Arts and Science, director of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and a member of the Business Council. He also served as chairman of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.



### Anthony Downs

Anthony Downs was one of the nation's leading experts on real estate finance, transportation, and infrastructure policy. As a Brookings scholar, his research focused on "smart growth," traffic congestion, and metropolitan policy. His book, *An Economic Theory*

of Democracy, which was published in 1957, before he had even turned 27, led to him being short-listed for a Nobel Prize. To this day, his book is considered one of the most impactful contributions of the past century to the topics of political economy, democratic political systems, and the theories of public choice and rational ignorance. For many years, Tony served as a true champion of Brookings Metro from its founding onwards, helping guide them towards the impressive success they've achieved today.



### Vartan Gregorian

Vartan Gregorian served on the Brookings Board of Trustees from 1994–1997. He was a towering figure in philanthropy, academia, and civic leadership who immigrated to the United States as a young man and went on to rise through the ranks to

leadership positions across civil society. As president, Vartan led rescue of the New York Public Library in the 1980s, a lasting legacy treasured by millions of New Yorkers and visitors alike. He served as the 12th president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York after previously serving as president of Brown University. Over his remarkable career, Vartan received numerous honorary degrees and prestigious awards, including the National Humanities Medal and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.



### Vernon Jordan

Vernon Jordan was first elected to the Brookings Board in 1986 and served as an Honorary and then Lifetime Trustee since 1996. He was a towering civil rights icon and true American leader who, after graduating from Howard University Law School, suc-

cessfully challenged the University of Georgia over racial discrimination in its admissions policies. He served as a field director for the NAACP, a director of the Southern Regional Council for the Voter Education Project, executive director of the United Negro College Fund, and as president of the National Urban League. He also served as a counselor to numerous presidents and other powerful figures in Washington. Vernon also had a successful career in business, serving as a partner of Akin Gump and then later of Lazard, and as member of the board of directors of some of the largest companies in the world. He was the author of a memoir, *Vernon Can Read!*, and a collection of his public speeches, *Make It Plain: Standing Up and Speaking Out*. PBS also produced a documentary of his remarkable life, *Vernon Jordan: Make It Plain*, which premiered in December 2020.



### **Arne Sorenson**

Arne Sorenson served as a Brookings Trustee since 2015 and as Chair of the Budget and Finance Committee since 2018. As a Board leader, Arne was deeply engaged with the management and scholarship of Brookings. At the time of his passing, Arne was

president and CEO of Marriott International, the first outside the Marriott family to serve as chief executive. Arne led the company to tremendous growth and success and provided steady leadership during the pandemic's challenges to the hospitality industry. He was a leader on many global issues, and led the company's efforts on diversity, equity, and inclusion, environmental sustainability, and human trafficking awareness and prevention. In honor of his leadership, the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), the American Hotel & Lodging Foundation, and the BHN Group established the Arne Sorenson Social Impact Leadership Award in 2021. In addition to serving on the Brookings Board, Arne was a member of the board of directors of Microsoft and Walmart.



### **David Swensen**

David Swensen served on the Brookings Board from 2004–2011, including as chair of the Investment Committee and as a member of the Executive Committee. He was a valued Trustee who steered Brookings's endowment through the turbulence

of the 2008 financial crisis. David was best known as the chief investment officer of Yale, where his management and stewardship of the University's endowment established him as a legend of institutional investing. In addition to growing the endowment dramatically through what came to be known as the "Yale Model," David mentored a generation of investment managers who lead investment offices at other colleges and universities. He was the author of two books on investing, *Pioneering Portfolio Management: An Unconventional Approach to Institutional Investment* and *Unconventional Success: A Fundamental Approach to Personal Investment*.



### **James D. Wolfensohn**

James Wolfensohn served on the Brookings Board of Trustees from 1983–2011. He was a visionary philanthropist who provided major support to Brookings for fresh, action-oriented thinking on effective solutions to the challenges of global devel-

opment. In honor of his generosity, Brookings established the Wolfensohn Center for Development to conduct research on how to lift people out of poverty and create a better future for young people. Jim served two terms as president of the World Bank, where he brought attention to the problem of corruption and championed the world's poor. Prior to leading the World Bank, he was a senior executive at Solomon Brothers and played a major role in rescuing Chrysler from the verge of bankruptcy. In addition to being a Brookings Trustee, he served as chairman of Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center.

# Sustaining Engagement on Global Challenges

The International Advisory Council (IAC) has been a valued part of the life of the Brookings Institution since 2006. Founded by Trustee Antoine van Agtmael and former Brookings President Strobe Talbott, the IAC comprises business and community leaders from around the world who bring critical perspectives on issues and events to Brookings and help amplify the independent, fact-based research of its experts and scholars. Throughout what was once again a challenging year, the IAC stepped up its engagement through frequent scholar briefings, quarterly “regional conversations,” and its annual meeting.



**Antoine van Agtmael**  
Co-Chairman of the IAC  
Brookings Trustee

IAC members provide critical financial resources through contributions to the President’s Special Initiatives Fund, which President John R. Allen uses to support key institutional priorities such as inclusion and diversity, AI regulation, the transition to low-carbon energy, renewing the middle class, congressional oversight, and the federal partnership on infrastructure, among others.

Just as they did in 2020, the International Advisory Council convened virtually for its 2021 annual meeting, which featured sessions on the state of the pandemic and the future of remote and hybrid work, as well as a broader range of topics, including White House climate policy, the future of U.S.-China relations, transforming legacy media organizations, the Biden administration’s agenda across a range of issues, and the role of corporations in addressing systemic racism. The highlight of the meeting was a fast-moving, interactive crisis simulation that divided IAC members, participating Trustees, and Brookings scholars into teams representing six countries that responded to a cascading series of fictional events, including an oil tanker disaster, a global pandemic, economic shock, and military action. The country teams struck alliances and took cooperative action to confront new developments and chart a path forward.



**Paul Desmarais, Jr.**  
Co-Chairman of the IAC  
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The IAC also came together virtually for quarterly “regional conversations” on specific topics of interest from around the world, including the U.S. elections, the impact of the U.S. on the global economy, and 2021 priorities for the African continent. Members heard views from experts across Brookings and shared perspectives on the impacts and implications of global developments on their regions and industries. The

IAC also heard observations on the new Biden administration from Capitol Hill in a conversation with Representatives Antonio Delgado (D-N.Y.) and Adam Kinzinger (R-Ill.). Vice President and Director of Global Economy and Development Brahim Sanga-fowa Coulibaly and a panel of Africa Growth Initiative scholars shared important insights from *Foresight Africa: Top Priorities for the Continent in 2021*, the latest edition of AGI’s flagship report. In addition to key findings from the 2021 report, this quarterly conversation also highlighted the impact of Brookings’s work on the continent.

The IAC remains an important source of knowledge and varied perspectives as our scholars develop innovative and actionable solutions to difficult policy issues that are rooted in rigorous research. As the world continues to grapple with large-scale eco-

conomic uncertainty and polarization, compounded by the ongoing pandemic, Brookings is grateful to the International Advisory Council and Co-chairs Antoine van Agtmael and Paul Desmarais, Jr. for their support and engagement, which make what we do possible.

Brookings looks forward to once again convening the IAC in person at our Washington, DC headquarters as soon as health conditions permit. Until then, the IAC will continue to leverage technological capabilities to ensure a close connection to Brookings and its work.

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Each of Brookings's research programs has established a Leadership Council that brings together business and community leaders to explore Brookings's independent research. The Program Leadership Councils (PLCs) take part in scholar briefings, discussions, and other policy-relevant activities that provide deep insights into the challenges facing society. They provide critical financial resources that make it possible for Brookings scholars to achieve impact with actionable solutions that inform policymakers and the public debate. The PLCs are valued members of the Brookings community, and the Institution is grateful for their support and involvement.

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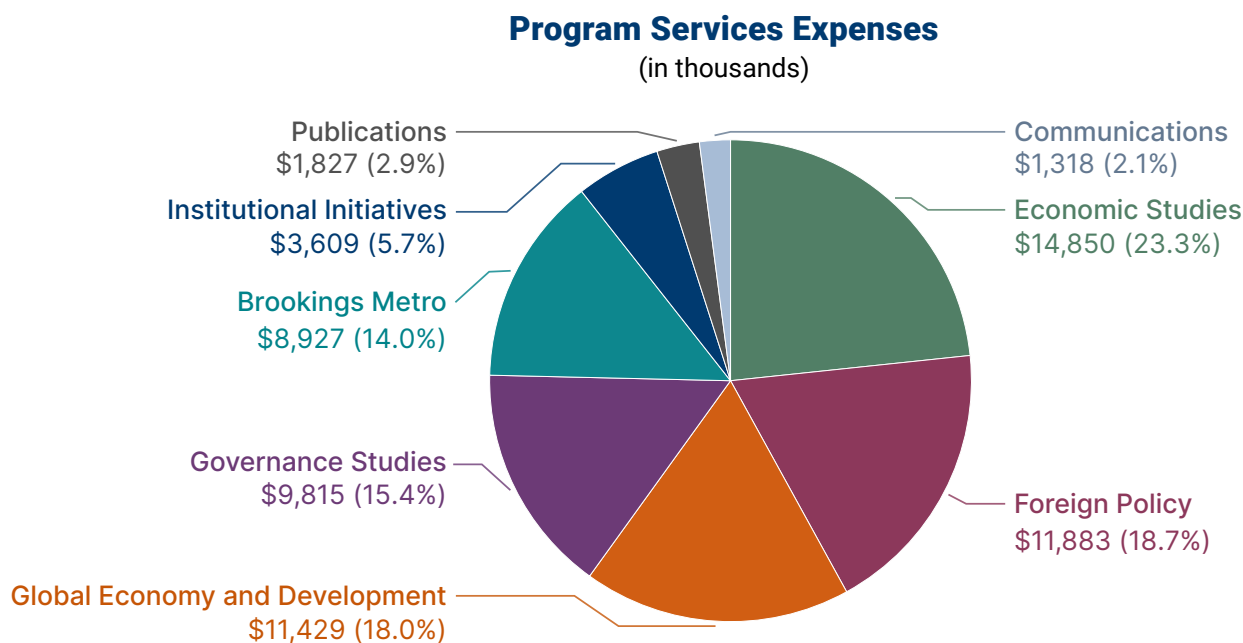
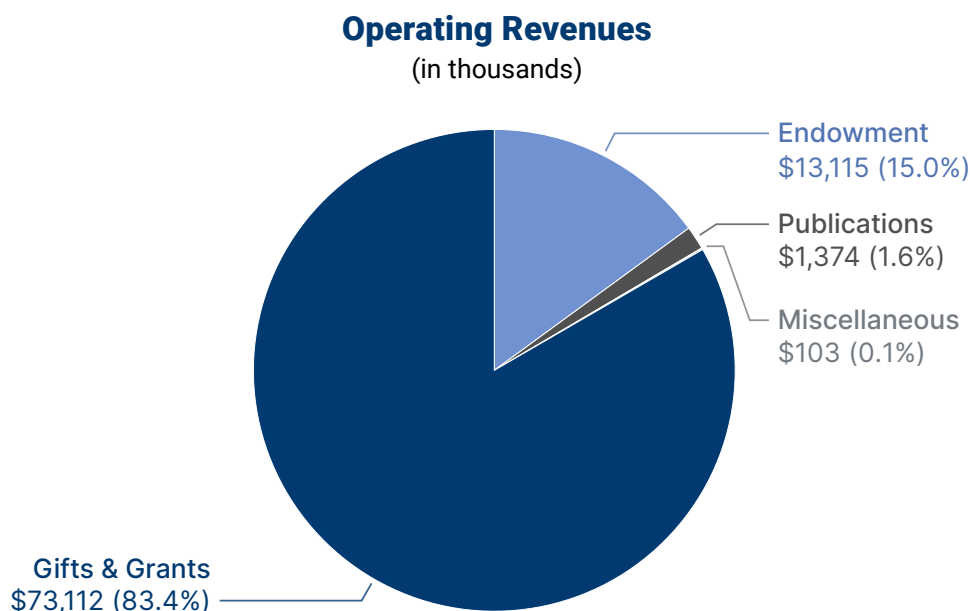
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