



THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE ■



Phelan United States Centre

Annual Report
2024/25

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Cover image: Adobe Stock
Design: RF Design UK Limited
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FACING PAGE

TOP: *Students outside LSE's Marshall Building during Welcome Week*

BOTTOM LEFT: *Student in LSE Library*

BOTTOM RIGHT: *Students studying*

ABOVE

TOP: *Students on LSE campus*

BOTTOM: *Students at LSE Students' Union event*

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Director's Message

"What happens in the United States matters to the world." As developments this past year have underscored, this is even more obvious today than it was 10 years ago when LSE approved the creation of a US Centre to provide expert international analysis and commentary on the United States. At a time of great churn in the United States, the need for clear-eyed, wide-ranging research and discussion about America's role in the world has never been greater.

Image © Maria Moore



Much of the Phelan US Centre's programming in 2024/25 focused on the Trump presidency and the events that led up to it, from the campaign for the Republican nomination, to the presidential election contest between Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris, to President Trump's policies and actions since taking office. Our events have been flooded with faculty, students and alumni, as well as hundreds joining virtually from across the globe.

In addition to our coverage of the 2024 US election, we ran a host of lectures, roundtables, and seminars on topics ranging from the impact of artificial intelligence on American democracy to the end of the neoliberal "Washington consensus." We closed out the academic year with two research conferences at LSE: one on the future of democracy in a multipolar world; the other, on the housing shortage in the United States.

In the pages that follow, we spotlight the notable achievements of our Centre Affiliate, Dr Lauren Sukin of the Department of International Relations. You will also see that the Centre's popular blog and podcast series had another successful year, sharing timely policy-relevant research and insights of world-leading scholars and analysts with our large, online global audience.

The Centre continues to invest considerable time and resources in our student-facing initiatives, which remain as popular as ever. To close out the academic year, we participated in LSE Festival 2025, "Visions for the Future", and hosted the early career conference of the American Politics Group of the Political Studies Association, the UK's learned society for the study of politics.

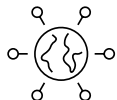
Over the past 10 years the Centre has grown from a start-up to an established, go-to source in London for analysis and commentary about the US. This would not have been possible without the Centre's many talented and dedicated faculty and staff. Along with our students and alumni, they are what makes the Phelan US Centre such a relevant, impactful hub for scholarly research, public debate, and international collaboration.

Professor Peter Trubowitz

Director, Phelan United States Centre

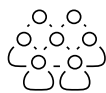
The Phelan US Centre in Numbers

Public Lectures (2024/25)



35

Total number of countries reached



327

Average in-person audience



68,526

Total audio downloads

Centre Affiliate Public Engagement (2024/25)



43

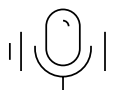
Centre Affiliate speaking engagements



66

Centre Affiliate media appearances

Podcasts (2024/25)



25

US Centre podcast episodes released



203,835

Total number of listens (2016 to 2025)

Social Media Followers



1,565

Instagram



2,644

LinkedIn



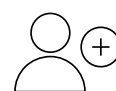
3,263

Facebook



7,401

X (Twitter)



14,873

Total followers across all platforms

USAPP Blog (2024 Calendar Year)



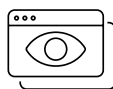
252

Total original posts



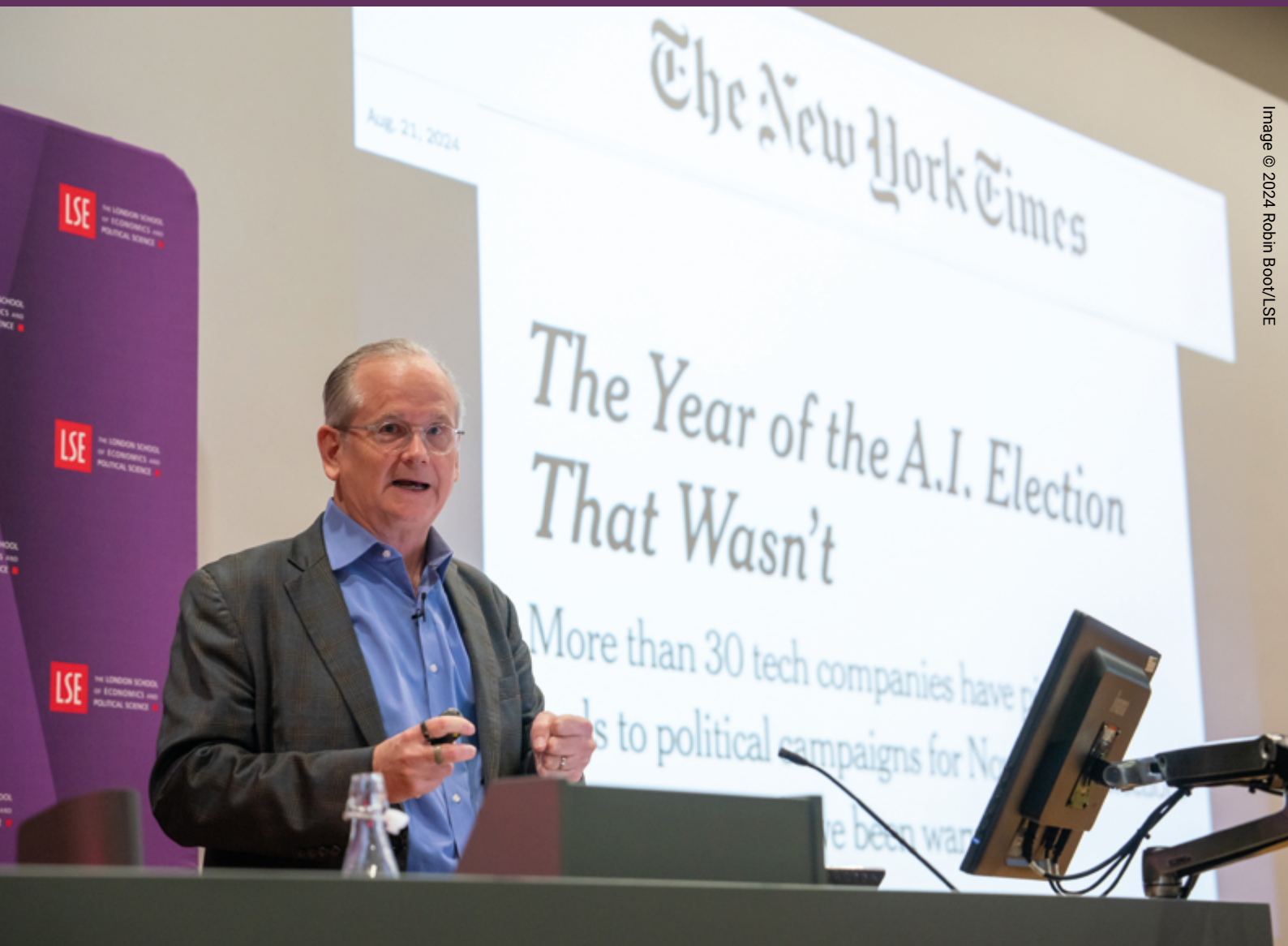
71,915

US-based users



351,936

Pageviews



Public Engagement

This year the Phelan US Centre's programme of events continued to convene conversations about the current social, economic, and political issues now facing the US, and its changing global role. Our public lectures included, *What AI is doing to America's democracy* with Professor Lawrence Lessig, chaired by LSE President and Vice Chancellor, Larry Kramer, and our LSE Festival event which spoke to the festival's theme, "Visions for the Future." 2024/25 also saw our support for our Centre Affiliates continue with small conferences and the continuation of our ongoing US-China Seminar Series.

ABOVE: Professor Lawrence Lessig (Harvard Law School) speaks at the Phelan US Centre event, *What AI is doing to America's democracy*, 15 October 2024

The Wenger Distinguished Lecture

The Phelan US Centre's Wenger Distinguished Lectures examine the role of the US in the global economy. Expert speakers including academics, business leaders and policymakers offer insights on subjects ranging from international trade to law and institutions.

Is there a new Washington consensus?

For roughly a quarter of a century after the Cold War, the Washington consensus, or neoliberalism, guided US foreign economic policymaking. Today, that market-oriented consensus is in tatters, as Republicans and Democrats alike have shifted toward government intervention, including industrial policy, and away from free trade. In this panel discussion, leading experts took stock of these developments and their international implications.

Speakers Stephanie Rickard (LSE Department of Government), Andrés Velasco (LSE School of Public Policy), Robert Wade (LSE Department of International Development)

Chair Peter Trubowitz

Date 11 February 2025

“There’s been huge change in Washington, and it’s really impossible to overstate how much change there’s been.”

Stephanie Rickard, Professor of Political Science, Department of Government



Image © istockphoto

Public Lectures

Our programme of public lectures brings together expert analysis on current issues facing the US in a global context in an accessible way, both in person and online. In 2024/25 our public lectures featured conversations with public intellectuals, scholars, journalists, and policymakers.

Image © Allan Warren



A Celebration of James Baldwin at 100

Chair Michael Cox
(LSE IDEAS)
Date 2 August 2024

What AI is doing to America's democracy

Speaker Lawrence Lessig (Harvard Law School)
Chair Larry Kramer (LSE President and Vice Chancellor)
Date 15 October 2024

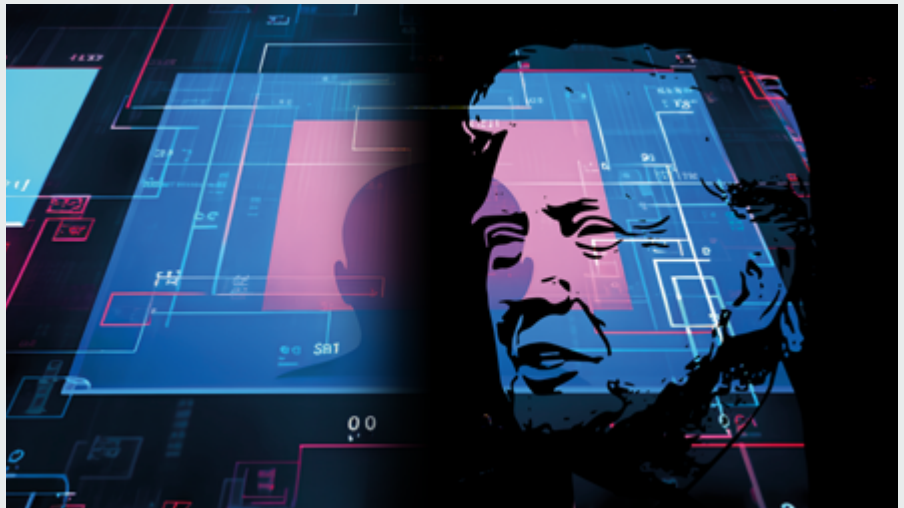


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Image © iStockphoto



The 2024 US election: turning point for America?

Speakers Mukulika Banerjee
(LSE Department of Anthropology),
Keith Magee (University College
London), Joseph C. Sternberg
(*The Wall Street Journal*)
Chair Peter Trubowitz
Date 6 November 2024



“We can also see that what is happening with Trump and his victory is part of a much larger shift that is happening globally, a larger disaffection.”

Elizabeth Ingleson, Assistant Professor,
Department of International History

Leadership or drift: what's next for US foreign policy?

Speakers Steven Erlanger (*The New York Times*), Elizabeth Ingleson (LSE Department of International History), Anand Menon (King's College London), Leslie Vinjamuri (SOAS, Chatham House)

Chair Peter Trubowitz

Date 21 January 2025



“With Donald Trump in office, whatever consensus there might have been is going to fragment.”

Andrés Velasco, Dean,
LSE School of Public Policy

Is there a new Washington consensus?

Speakers Stephanie Rickard (LSE Department of Government), Andrés Velasco (LSE School of Public Policy), Robert Wade (LSE Department of International Development)

Chair Peter Trubowitz

Date 11 February 2025



US-China Seminar Series

Since beginning in 2021, the Phelan US Centre Seminar Series on US-China relations has hosted a range of expert speakers on important topics relating to the US-China relationship. These seminars have three broad themes: Geopolitics and strategic competition; Global supply chains, multinational enterprises and trade politics; and Technological innovation and domestic institutions.

Series co-chairs:
David Soskice
(LSE Department
of Government)
and Peter
Trubowitz

China's evolving approach to economic security

Speaker Yeling Tan
(University of Oxford)
Date 8 October 2024

Escalation or stabilization: US-China relations under a new administration in Washington?

Speaker Minxin Pei
(Claremont McKenna College)
Date 6 February 2025

Hard then, harder now: why technology export controls against China are unlikely to succeed

Speakers Jennifer Lind and Michael
Mastanduno (Dartmouth College)
Date 29 October 2024

US-China strategic stability: prospects and challenges

Speaker Nicola Leveringhaus
(King's College London)
Date 4 March 2025

From unilateral failure to multilateral success? The evolution of American chip controls on China

Speaker Douglas Fuller
(Copenhagen Business School)
Date 3 December 2024

The origins of the US-China chip war

Speaker John Minnich
(LSE Department of International
Relations)
Date 25 March 2025

LSE Festival 2025

This year's LSE Festival explored the theme of **"Visions for the Future."** Taking place from 16 to 21 June 2025, the festival examined how we can learn lessons from the past and tackle the challenges of today and shape the future across topics such as artificial intelligence (AI), climate change, inequality and changing political realities.

The future of US-China relations

Navigating the US-China relationship will be one of the great challenges of our time. It will impact everything from geopolitics to global growth to technological innovation. Can this pivotal international relationship be managed peacefully and productively, or are we heading toward a world of economic fracture, military rivalry, and multiple blocs? This panel of leading experts considered the possibilities for progress on issues ranging from international security to international trade, to climate change.

Speakers G. John Ikenberry (Princeton University),
Rana Mitter (Harvard University),
Nathalie Tocci (Istituto Affari Internazionali)

Chair Peter Trubowitz

Date 20 June 2025

"There's a quest for legitimacy. If the hegemony regionally or globally is under contest by Beijing and Washington, what the Global South thinks matters."

G. John Ikenberry, Albert G. Milbank
Professor of Politics and International
Affairs, Princeton University



LEFT TO RIGHT: Professor Rana Mitter (Harvard University), Professor Nathalie Tocci (Istituto Affari Internazionali), Professor G. John Ikenberry (Princeton University), at the LSE Festival Event, The future of US-China relations, 20 June 2025

Image © 2025 Andrew Lunn/LSE

Phelan US Centre Small Conferences

This year, the Phelan US Centre hosted two small conferences organised by Centre Affiliates and a conference with the Political Studies Association's American Politics Group. These conferences bring together scholars from Brazil, Canada, Hong Kong, South Africa, the US, Europe, the UK, and LSE to present and discuss ongoing research.

The housing squeeze: the politics of shrinking domestic space in the US and beyond

Image © iStockphoto



TOP LEFT: *Light Public Housing in Hong Kong. The government builds Light Public Housing units expeditiously in order to fill the short-term gap of public housing supply*

TOP RIGHT: *Housing Squeeze zine produced during the conference*



Academic Leads Jessie Speer (LSE Department of Geography and Environment) and David Madden (LSE Department of Sociology)
Date 8-9 May 2025

Recently in the United States there has been a growing trend for housing models that shrink private living space, including tiny housing, co-living, and micro-flats. This trend has been the subject of intense debate across academic, journalistic and policy circles. But the minimalisation of domestic life is not new. Mobile homes and single-room occupancy hotels have been a prominent feature of US housing for many years. The rise of small living arrangements only accelerated in the

wake of the 2008 global financial crash and the growing disconnect between house prices and earnings.

While much of the academic literature on micro homes examines the US context, the rise of small living spaces outside the United States has followed distinct trajectories.

This workshop brought scholars of US tiny housing together with researchers looking at housing and homelessness in Hong Kong, Europe, India and Canada. This conference also featured the collective production of a [zine](#) that can be used in other discussions and as a teaching tool.

International relations and democracy in a multipolar world

Academic Leads Rohan Mukherjee (LSE Department of International Relations), Luca Tardelli (LSE Department of International Relations), Theresa Squatrito (LSE Department of International Relations), and Mathias Koenig-Archibugi (LSE Department of Government)
Date 15-16 May 2025

The US-led international order is under strain from without and within. Authoritarian powers such as Russia and China are challenging the core tenets of global cooperation and conflict management. Rising states of the Global South like India, Brazil, and South Africa demand reformed multilateralism in the institutions of global governance, and the US and its Western allies face a domestic surge of right-wing populism that seeks to reverse the eighty-year-old open and interdependent system of international relations. At stake is democracy, a core tenet of American political life and foreign policy.

Historically, most international organisations that managed the international global order were grounded in Western democracy, with major

waves of decolonisation pushing the international order in democratic directions. Now, the US-led order faces questions about its viability as a domain of democratic discourse and practices, indeed whether it was ever democratic at all, as the decolonised seek a greater voice in global governance.

The conference considered how important these democratic discourses and practices are in the broader context of challenges to the US-led international order and the domestic contestation over the future trajectory of US foreign policy.

BELOW: Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken participates in a UN Security Council ministerial meeting on Ukraine in New York City, New York, on 24 February 2023



Image © State Department/C. Kennedy/Public Domain

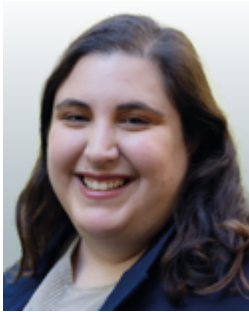
American Politics Group Conference – A New Era in America?

Academic Lead Josephine Harmon, Assistant Professor in Political Science Treasurer & ECR Secretary, American Politics Group
Date 13 June 2025

The conference brought together early career researchers to discuss the theme of the 2024 US presidential election and contemporary US politics, with a focus on the first few months of Donald Trump's administration. What should we learn from the 2024 US election? How should we view Trump's policies in the first several months? What does the second Trump administration mean for US-EU relations? The conference brought together scholars from different academic disciplines with diverse voices to explore this theme.



Centre Affiliate Spotlight



Dr Lauren Sukin is an Assistant Professor in the Department of International Relations at LSE and a Centre Affiliate at the Phelan United States Centre. During her sabbatical year, Dr Sukin is based in the Security Studies Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), as a Stanton Nuclear Security Fellow. Dr Sukin's research examines the dynamics of credibility and crisis stability, focusing on nuclear weapons, emerging technologies, and alliance politics.

Dr Sukin has received a prestigious grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York for the project, "Polarisation and nuclear policy." Running from 2024 to 2026, this project explores how polarisation influences US nuclear credibility and leadership. Hosted by the Phelan US Centre, this grant supports Research Officer Helen Webley-Brown, Research Assistants Romane Branthomme and Alexandre Dupont-Sinhsattanak, as well as Centre Assistant Joss Harrison.

The project team is working towards several publications using a variety of methods to explore the effects of US domestic politics on the global nuclear order. For example, one project uses text-as-data methods to identify polarisation in nuclear messaging on social media, while another uses survey experiments conducted in US ally and partner states to show that such polarisation undercuts extended deterrence. The grant additionally supports academic engagement, outreach to policy stakeholders, and seed funding

to galvanise new research on the nexus between domestic and nuclear policy. Most recently, seed funding was awarded to A.J. Davies, a PhD candidate in LSE's Department of International Relations.

"My team benefits immensely from the incredible staff and interdisciplinary vibrancy of the Phelan US Centre."

In the 2024/25 academic year, Dr Sukin continued participating in the Phelan US Centre's Undergraduate Research Assistantship (UGRA) programme, working with undergraduate student Maria de Gregorio Cattaneo di S.Elia on the project, "The role of nuclear weapons in US alliance politics." Alongside the work of previous UGRAs, Maria supports case studies for Dr Sukin's book project. This project assesses how US allies seek to enhance their nuclear security under the shadow of the US nuclear umbrella. Dr Sukin's previous UGRAs have produced annotated bibliographies of secondary literature, collected archival evidence, and analysed and translated archival sources.

Dr Sukin and Centre Affiliate Dr Rohan Mukherjee are currently working to edit a collection of articles for the *Texas National Security Review*. Alongside a podcast for the Phelan US Centre's *The Ballpark*, this essay collection is a key output of the June 2024 Phelan US Centre hosted workshop, "US nuclear strategy in a changing Indo-Pacific", co-hosted by Dr Sukin, Dr Mukherjee, and Centre Affiliate Professor Matthew Jones. The workshop brought together an international group of scholars to examine the second-order effects of US-China competition on nuclear strategy around the globe.

"Without the generous support of the Phelan US Centre and the exciting intellectual environment that it creates, my research would not be possible."



Image © 2024 LSE/ Maria Moore

Digital Content Innovation

This year, the Phelan US Centre's digital platforms – the USAPP (*USA Politics and Policy*) blog, and *The Ballpark* podcast supported the Centre's status as the go-to UK hub for academic commentary on the US. Our blog hosted hundreds of commentary and research articles, and our podcast released dozens of interviews, covering contemporary issues on the US from and with academic experts and practitioners. These platforms continue to be a space for academics, activists, and policymakers from across the world to address important contemporary issues as they relate to the US and to connect their research and thinking with a global audience.

ABOVE:
Student in LSE
Centre Building

USA Politics and Policy (USAPP) Blog



140

Countries reached



350k

Number of views in the past year



252

Original articles published



11

Number of years of blog publication



52%

Audience based in the US

About LSE USAPP

Now in its 11th year of publication, the Phelan US Centre's regular blog, **USAPP – USA Politics and Policy** has continued to be an important outlet and hub for evidence-based commentary and new social science research from scholars from LSE and globally. In 2024, USAPP published over 250 original articles and received over 350,000 views from over 140 countries; 52 per cent of USAPP's audience was based in the US and 20 per cent, the UK. This year, USAPP has been an important part of the Phelan US Centre's coverage of the 2024 presidential election; our ongoing blog series, *The 2024 Elections* which began in May 2023, now includes nearly 60 articles from academics worldwide. The blog has also been an important source of analysis following the beginning of President Donald Trump's second term, posting commentaries from LSE faculty and others on the new administration's policies.

USAPP's authors this year have included academics, researchers, and activists who, working with the blog team, are able to publish their work in an accessible format which enables them to reach a wide

audience including students, policymakers and other academics. The blog also continues to publish contributions from PhD students and early career researchers at LSE and beyond. The USAPP blog has continued to be a venue supporting the Centre's other programmes, including hosting the winning and two runner-up essays in the Centre's master's students essay competition (centred on AI) and reports from LSE master's students on the Centre's programme of events.

USAPP impact

In 2024, the USAPP blog continued to be one of the most viewed LSE blogs. USAPP's blog contributors have been regularly asked for media comment based on their blog articles, and previous USAPP articles were also mentioned in a UK parliamentary debate on the children of prisoners. USAPP has also continued to be cited in policy reports including from the UK's Institute of Economic Affairs, Bretton Woods Project and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. In 2024/25 USAPP articles were mentioned in popular outlets such as *Vox*, *The Standard*, *The Guardian* and *The British Medical Journal*.



Image © Shutterstock

The Ballpark Podcast

Since 2016, *The Ballpark* podcast has published regular audio content to support the Phelan US Centre's role as a hub for accessible commentary on the US. Featuring interviews with academics, policymakers and activists who discuss important contemporary social science issues as they relate to the US, this was the podcast's first full year releasing episodes biweekly. With more than 150 episodes released and over 200,000 downloads since 2016, the podcast's reach continues to grow.

This year, *The Ballpark* spoke to experts from LSE and elsewhere, including Professor Adia Harvey Wingfield (Washington University in St Louis), Professor Fawaz Gerges (LSE Department of International Relations), Professor Lawrence Lessig (Harvard Law School), Professor Kishore Mahbubani (National University of Singapore), and Professor Mukulika Banerjee (LSE Department of Anthropology).

In August 2024, *The Ballpark*, along with our 2023 limited series, *Climate Change: America and the World* were shortlisted in the Independent Podcast Awards, in the News & Politics and Educational: Environment & Natural World categories. This shortlisting, by a panel of leading industry judges, recognised the continuing work of the LSE Phelan US Centre in bringing together timely and relevant evidence-based commentary from diverse voices.

The Ballpark and supporting the student experience

The Ballpark continued to support our student programmes with an interview with 2023/24 undergraduate research assistant, Evelyne Ong, and their faculty supervisor, Visiting Professor Jeffrey Legro, about their research collaboration. *The Ballpark* also featured an interview with PhD Summer Research Grant recipient, Nick Lewis, on "The social media

spiral of silence." These interviews give LSE students a way to participate in an interview with the aim to promote their research and work to a wider non-academic audience. *The Ballpark* has also continued to speak to and publish interviews with the winner and runners-up in our master's students essay competition.

Image © Yingchou Han/Unsplash





Image © 2025 Robin Boot/LSE

Student Programmes

Master's students essay competition session in parliament with the British-American Parliamentary Group. LEFT TO RIGHT: The Lord Fox, essay competition winner Kayode Adeniyi, runners-up Francesca Nicolodi and Natasha Chávez, The Lord Kirkhope, and Emily Darlington MP

In 2024/25 the Phelan US Centre's student-facing programmes have continued. We welcomed a new cohort of Undergraduate Research Assistants to work with our Centre Affiliates to conduct interdisciplinary research on the challenges facing the US. The Phelan US Centre's PhD Summer Research Grants also continued to support research by early career scholars on the US, and the programme was "Highly Commended" in the "Outstanding Impact Culture" category of this year's inaugural LSE Impact Prize. Now in its third year, our essay competition for master's students addressed the potential opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence and the US.

Undergraduate Research Assistantships

In 2024/25 the Phelan US Centre's Undergraduate Research Assistantship (UGRA) programme entered its eighth year of pairing students from across LSE departments to work with our Centre Affiliates on their research or project. This past year, nine undergraduate students have supported academics' research projects through activities including library research and literature reviews, reviewing archival resources, designing and analysing survey experiments, and creating text databases.

1. Conflicts over public lands

Research Assistant: Ines McCairley, Department of Government
Faculty Research Lead: Professor Cheryl Schonhardt-Bailey, Department of Government

2. Passing the torch of Anglo-American financial cooperation

Research Assistant: Lila Rota, Department of Government
Faculty Research Lead: Dr James Morrison, Department of International Relations

3. US grand strategy in the digital age

Research Assistant: M. Aditta Arian, Department of Economics
Faculty Research Lead: Professor Peter Trubowitz, Department of International Relations and the Phelan US Centre

4. Political mobilising among Chicago's police and teachers' unions

Research Assistant: Nooralhoda Tillaih, Department of Anthropology
Faculty Research Lead: Dr Johann Koehler, Department of Social Policy

5. How presidents justify the withdrawal of US troops

Research Assistant: Han Chia, Department of International Relations
Faculty Research Lead: Dr Jonny Hall, Department of International Relations

6. Globalization and its historians

Research Assistant: Savannah Culpepper, Department of International History
Faculty Research Lead: Dr Elizabeth Ingleson, Department of International History

7. The politics of housing tenure

Research Assistant: Victoria Epshtein, Department of Social Policy
Faculty Research Lead: Dr David Madden, Department of Sociology

8. The role of nuclear weapons in US alliance politics

Research Assistant: Maria de Gregorio Cattaneo di S.Elia, Department of International Relations
Faculty Research Lead: Dr Lauren Sukin, Department of International Relations

9. The State of the States

Research Assistant: Isabel Mangum, Department of International History
Faculty Research Leads: Professor Peter Trubowitz and Chris Gilson, Phelan United States Centre



2024/25 UGRA programme participants. LEFT TO RIGHT: Tongxin Li (Open Evaluation project, Department of Anthropology), Savannah Culpepper (Department of International History), Isabel Mangum (Department of International History), Lila Rota (Department of Government), Ines McCairley (Department of Government), Nooralhoda Tillaih (Department of Anthropology), Maria de Gregorio Cattaneo di S.Elia (Department of International Relations)

"The UGRA programme has been one of the most inspiring experiences I have had at LSE."

Khushi Vajpeyi, UGRA, 2023/24

Centre PhD Summer Research Grants

Now in its seventh year, the Phelan US Centre's PhD Summer Research Grant scheme has continued to support PhD students from across LSE departments to undertake internationally-oriented research on the US. Grants provide LSE's early career scholars with resources to support their research activities.

Research Grants in 2025

1. Political behaviour in the face of contemporary challenges to consolidated democracies Isolde Hegemann, Department of Government

2. Growth and decline: exploring development pathways across the American system, 1970 to 2019 Ali Glisson, Department of Geography and Environment

3. Regulating automated trading: financial data integrity and market stability in the US Maximilian Goehmann, Department of Management

4. The global political transition and the evolution of violent security assemblages: Somali security from 1991 to the present Partha Moman, Department of International Relations

5. The roots of the Black abolitionist feminist tradition: from the Combahee River Collective to the Movement for Black Lives Arianna Parisi, Department of International History

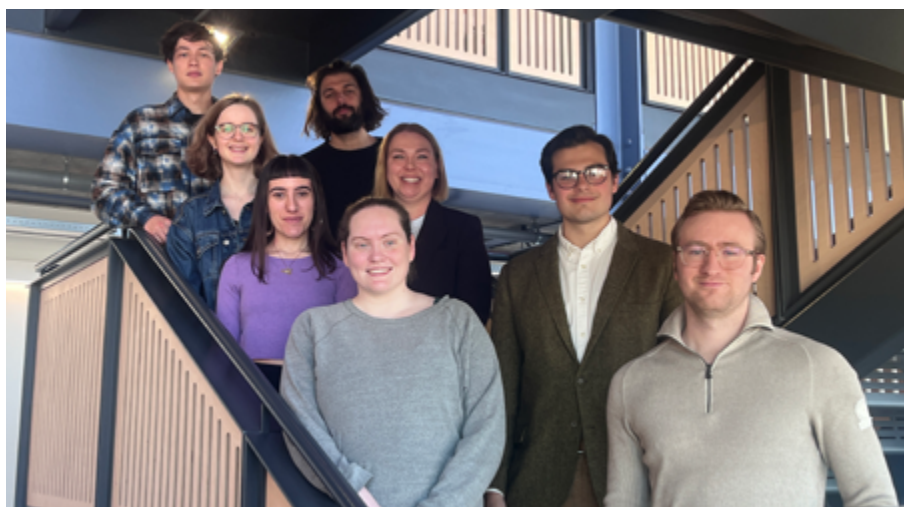
6. Between two allies: US policy towards Greece and Turkey during the 1974 Cyprus crisis Mina Rigby-Thompson, Department of International History

7. Friends of the family: informal actors in Iran-US relations during the late Pahlavi period Jack Roush, Department of International History

8. Behavioural incentives for vaccine uptake: heterogeneity across individuals during the COVID-19 pandemic Daniele Sudsataya, Department of Health Policy

9. High-stakes influencers: how amicus briefs shape judicial decision-making in US climate litigation Kaia Turowski, LSE Law School

Image © 2025 Bharati Kondepudy/LSE



LEFT TO RIGHT: 2024/25 PhD Summer Research Grant recipients
Daniele Sudsataya, Isolde Hegemann, Arianna Parisi, Partha Moman,
Mina Rigby-Thompson, Ali Glisson, Jack Roush and Maximilian Goehmann

“The programme offers invaluable support, both financially and in terms of research opportunities...The grant also connects you with a vibrant community of scholars interested in US-focused research, fostering collaboration and intellectual growth.”

Ziqi Zhong, PhD Grant recipient, 2023/24

Master's Students Essay Competition: Is AI a threat or an opportunity for the US?

Recent years have seen growth in the capability and use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools across society, including by business, academia, the media, and the economy more widely. At the same time, many commentators have expressed concerns about bias in AI, its contribution to global challenges like climate change, and that it may even be a threat to society or democracy.

For its third year, the Phelan US Centre's master's students essay competition centred on AI, with the prompt: "Is AI a threat or an opportunity for the US?" Entrants were encouraged to interpret this prompt from a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives. Essays were shortlisted by Phelan US Centre staff and sent to a faculty judging panel which included Professor Peter Trubowitz.

Kayode Adeniyi (LSE Department of Management) wrote the winning essay, "AI in the US: the next space race or the next subprime crisis?" and received a £500 prize. The runners up, Natasha Chávez (LSE Department of International Relations), and Francesca Nicolodi (LSE Department of Social Policy), each

received a £250 prize. All three essays were posted on the Centre's USAPP blog.

In April 2025, the Phelan US Centre returned to the UK Parliament in Westminster, with the winning student, Kayode Adeniyi, presenting his essay to members of the British-American Parliamentary Group (BAPG), including The Lord Fox, Emily Darlington, MP, The Rt. Hon. Richard Holden, MP, and The Lord Kirkhope.

The winner and runners-up also presented a poster based on their essays, "AI and America: three stories about the future that's already here", as part of Knowledge Beyond Boundaries, LSE's annual interdisciplinary student research conference, on 17 June 2025.

Image © 2025 Robin Boot/LSE



Master's students essay competition winner Kayode Adeniyi

"Thoughtful ideas still have power, and the right rooms are still listening. I'm grateful to the LSE Phelan US Centre for creating the kind of platform where that becomes possible."

Kayode Adeniyi, 2025 master's students essay competition winner



Image © 2024 Maria Moore/LSE

About the Phelan US Centre

The Phelan United States Centre at LSE is a hub for global expertise, analysis and commentary on America. Its mission is to promote policy-relevant and internationally-oriented scholarship to meet the demand for rigorous, clear-eyed, and independent analysis of the United States.

Pioneering an approach to understanding contemporary America that is diverse, multidisciplinary and internationalised, the Phelan US Centre draws on the expertise of many LSE faculty who write, teach and comment about the United States across virtually every department.

About the Director

Peter Trubowitz is Professor of International Relations at LSE and Associate Fellow at Chatham House. He writes and comments frequently on world affairs and American politics. His published work includes: *Geopolitics and Democracy: The Western Liberal Order from Foundation to Fracture* (Oxford, 2023); *Politics and Strategy: Partisan Ambition and American Statecraft* (Princeton, 2011); and *Defining the National Interest: Conflict and Change in American Foreign Policy* (Chicago, 1998).

An award-winning teacher, Professor Trubowitz has lectured on world affairs to universities worldwide as well as to government bodies, think tanks and private companies. A frequent television

guest on Bloomberg, CNBC and other international media outlets, he has undertaken research supported by grants and fellowships from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the John M. Olin Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Social Science Research Council, among others.

Before joining LSE, he was Professor of Government at the University of Texas at Austin. He has held visiting positions at Harvard, Princeton, Universidad de Chile, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE) in Mexico City, Tsinghua University, and Beijing Foreign Studies University, where he was the J. William Fulbright Distinguished Lecturer in American Foreign Policy.

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LEFT TO RIGHT:
Professor Larry Kramer
(LSE President and
Vice Chancellor),
Professor Lawrence
Lessig (Harvard Law
School) and Professor
Peter Trubowitz,
following the event,
*What AI is doing to
America's democracy*,
15 October 2024

Advisory Board

The Advisory Board provides external perspective and guidance on the Centre's mission and work.

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John Ikenberry is the Albert G. Milbank Professor of Politics and International Affairs in the Department of Politics and the School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. He is Co-Director of Princeton's Center for International Security Studies.

Nicola Lacey, LSE



Nicola Lacey is School Professor of Law, Gender and Social Policy at LSE. Before joining LSE, she was Senior Research Fellow at All Souls College and Professor of Criminal Law and Legal Theory at the University of Oxford.

Tim Besley, LSE



Sir Tim Besley is School Professor of Economics and Political Science and W. Arthur Lewis Professor of Development Economics in the Department of Economics at LSE. He is a member of the UK's National Infrastructure Commission.

Tracey L. Meares, Yale University



Tracey Meares is Walton Hale Hamilton Professor at Yale Law School and a Founding Director of Yale's Justice Collaboratory. She served on President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing and is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Lloyd Gruber, LSE



Lloyd Gruber is the former Dean of LSE's Institute of Public Affairs and Associate Professor of Public Policy (Education). Before joining LSE he was Associate Professor at the University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy.

Leslie Vinjamuri, Chatham House and SOAS



Leslie Vinjamuri is Director of the US and Americas Programme and Chair of Faculty, Queen Elizabeth Academy for Leadership in International Affairs at Chatham House, Royal Institute of International Affairs. She is Professor of International Relations, SOAS University of London.

Matthew Jones, LSE



Matthew Jones is Professor of International History and former Head of the Department of International History at LSE. He is the Cabinet Office Official Historian of the UK strategic nuclear programme.

Management Committee

The Management Committee is made up of LSE faculty who monitor our programming, research and operations.

CHAIR – Peter Trubowitz



Director of Phelan US Centre
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Stephanie Rickard



Stephanie Rickard is Professor of Political Science in the Department of Government at LSE. Professor Rickard's research examines the domestic and international politics influencing trade policies, including tariffs, state subsidies and "buy national" programmes.

Jeffrey M. Chwieroth



Jeffrey M. Chwieroth is Professor of International Relations and Head of the Department of International Relations at LSE. Professor Chwieroth's research examines the international political economy of international money and finance.

David Soskice



David Soskice is LSE School Professor of Political Science and Economics Emeritus, Emeritus Professor of Political Science at Duke University, Fellow of the British Academy, Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, a Member of Academia Europaea, and of the LSE International Inequalities Institute.

Elizabeth Ingleson



Dr Elizabeth Ingleson is an assistant professor of international history. She is the author of *Made in China: When US-China Interests Converged to Transform Global Trade* (Harvard University Press, 2024).

Imaobong Umoren



Imaobong Umoren is Associate Professor in the Department of International History at LSE. Dr Umoren's research focuses on histories of race, gender, activism and political thought in the Caribbean, Britain and the US during the modern and contemporary periods.

James Morrison



James Morrison is Associate Professor in the Department of International Relations at LSE. He specialises in international political economy. Dr Morrison's work examines the role of ideas and intellectuals in foreign economic policy. His first book is *England's Cross of Gold: Keynes, Churchill, and the Governance of Economic Beliefs*.

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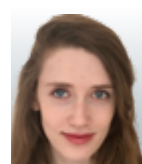
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