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As the world continues to change around us, the role faltering institutions play in our public policy has never been more clear. CEG continues to **center scholarship in conversations on institutional reform** in the broader context of strengthening our democracy: conversations that bring together myriad stakeholders and transcend stark differences to achieve our ultimate goal of a flourishing democracy and effective government.
As the Center for Effective Government (CEG) enters its fourth year of operation at the University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy, much has changed since its inception in 2019. Locally, nationally, and across the world, power has transitioned from old leaders to new, pressing problems have come and gone, and some progress has been achieved, often in fits and starts. And yet, amidst these changes, there is still an urgent need to address the issues of public importance—from the rise of autocracy to the threats of mis- and dis-information; from unprecedented public health and climate crises to rising inequality and polarization—from an institutional perspective. As the world changes around us, a common threat persists: democratic institutions are unable to rise to the task, further fueling the public’s skepticism of our governments, our leaders, and our democratic norms.

And so, CEG’s ambitious mission—to study, debate, and advance reforms that strengthen democratic institutions and improve the capacity of government to solve public problems—has never been more important. With a renewed focus on the overarching themes of ideas, engagement, and education, we have continued to build out a robust array of programming, events, and affiliates this year. We remain committed to doing work that embodies our values—work that is at once inclusive, serious-minded, and action-oriented—and those most important to the ethos of the University of Chicago and Harris School of Public Policy, such as rigorous, data-driven inquiry, open debate, and freedom of expression.

Across all our efforts and activities, 2021-22 afforded us an opportunity to hone our approach, focusing in particular on two key priorities that would best serve our mission.

First, we have devoted significant resources to strengthening our footing in scholarship, cultivating and contributing to a network of experts on issues related to democracy and reform while directly supporting innovative, original research. From launching our collaborative Data & Democracy Initiative, hosting our first American Politics Conference, the continued success of Not Another Politics Podcast and a host of partner events, we strove in 2021-22 to put scholarship at the center of all that we do.

Second, in both our public-facing work and behind the scenes, we aimed to leverage our unique convening power to bring together the myriad experts in the reform space—across often stark differences of sector, ideology, experience, and theory of action—to build trust, find common ground, work collaboratively, and move forward in tandem on critical structural issues even in the face of strong head-winds.

Thanks to the resources available to us as a member of University of Chicago community, a slowly re-opening world facilitating interactions in a newly-hybrid environment, and a growing network of partners, affiliates, alumni, and experts, we have brought this convening power to bear on key issues, from challenges facing democracy in the digital age, to the design of our local and national governing bodies, and more. As we have engaged with these partners in the democracy reform space, we have intentionally drawn attention to the specific threats posed by ineffective government and institutional deficiencies—and made space to consider those threats in the broader effort to protect democracy.

Surely, there is still significant work to do: the project of institutional reform and creating a flourishing democracy are not goals for a single year, but those of a generation. Taken together though, our efforts in 2021-22 represent a meaningful step towards advancing our mission and ultimate goals for a strong, healthy democracy that fuels an effective government.
PARTNERS AND EVENT CO-SPONSORS

25 EVENTS HOSTED IN 2021-22 FEATURING MORE THAN 60 PANELISTS AND SPEAKERS

NETWORK OF MORE THAN 280 STUDENT AND FACULTY AFFILIATES, FELLOWS, AND ALUMNI

PODCAST EPISODES DOWNLOADED 150,000 TIMES BY 60,000 UNIQUE LISTENERS IN 155 COUNTRIES

$190,000 IN RESEARCH GRANT DOLLARS

2021-22 AT A GLANCE
We would like to thank all those who made 2021-22 at the Center for Effective Government a success. Without your steadfast support and commitment to our mission, our efforts toward a more effective and responsive government would not be possible.

First, we must express our deep gratitude to the Center for Effective Government team and our colleagues at the Harris School of Public Policy and University of Chicago for their ongoing partnership and support. Our appreciation extends to all of CEG’s affiliates, including faculty, fellows, and alumni, who act as stewards of our mission and ambassadors for our work. To our friends and partners from across campus and beyond in the worlds of academia, advocacy, government, journalism, and in the civic and private sectors, we thank you for your collaboration and for working alongside us in service of meaningful government and democracy reform.

We’re immensely grateful, too, for the financial support we’ve received this year—from the Harris School, the University’s Social Science Division, Democracy Fund, the Harris Family Foundation, the Searle Fund at the Chicago Community Trust, the Waraich Family Fund, and Wicklow Capital. Your contributions, as well as your guidance and counsel, enable us to do our best work while helping to secure a strong future for the Center and its mission.

Finally, we are thankful to all of you, for following the work of the Center for Effective Government and your commitment to building a more effective government.

WILLIAM HOWELL is the director of the Center for Effective Government and the Sydney Stein Professor in American Politics at the University of Chicago, where he holds appointments in the Harris School of Public Policy, the College, and the political science department, which he chairs. He has written widely on separation-of-powers issues and American political institutions, especially the presidency. William is the author or co-author of numerous books, most recently Presidents, Populism, and the Crisis of Democracy (with Terry Moe), and his research has appeared in numerous professional journals and edited volumes. William is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a former fellow at the Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. He has written for a wide variety of media outlets, including the Boston Review, Prospect Magazine, Wall Street Journal, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, and Education Next. Before joining the University of Chicago, William taught in the government department at Harvard University and the political science department at the University of Wisconsin. He received his PhD in political science from Stanford University.

SADIA SINDHU is the founding executive director of the Center for Effective Government. She has served in a variety of strategic roles in the public and private sectors, most recently as director of the University of Chicago’s Civic Leadership Academy, prior to its integration with CEG. Sadia is a Fellow in the second class of the Civil Society Fellowship, a Partnership of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and The Aspen Institute, and a member of the Aspen Global Leadership Network. She currently serves on the Research Advisory Council for the Partnership for Public Service, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that strives for a more effective federal government by inspiring a new generation to serve and transforming the way government works. Sadia is an inaugural member of the Vote is Sacred Thought Leaders Organizing Committee, a national, multi-year, nonpartisan civic engagement initiative led by Interfaith America. Sadia has previously held roles at Rothschild Global Advisory; the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, and Human Capital Research Corporation. Sadia served on the board of the Muslim Public Affairs Council, a national American Muslim advocacy organization dedicated to improving public understanding and policies that impact American Muslims by engaging government, media, and communities. She received an M$ in higher education policy from Northwestern University and a BSFS in international politics from Georgetown University.
Any efforts towards meaningful reform must be built upon sound, evidence-based ideas from across disciplines—innovative and rigorous research on the threats to democratic governance and solutions to ineffective government. That’s why in 2021-22, CEG launched critical new initiatives to expand that body of research and widen its reach in academia and beyond.
DATA & DEMOCRACY

Democracy faces increasingly worrisome threats in today’s digital and online world. Understanding and addressing these challenges and their effect on governments and society requires new inquiry at the intersection of democracy, public policy, technology, and data science. Data & Democracy, a joint collaboration between CEG and the University’s Data Science Institute (DSI), launched in March to ignite interdisciplinary research on the digital challenges facing democracies around the world.

At its launch, the initiative awarded over $170,000 in inaugural research funding, seeding four new collaborations addressing questions on political participation and freedom of expression in the digital age. These projects—led by principal investigators from the University of Chicago’s Harris School of Public Policy, Law School, Social Sciences Division, Computer Science Department, Psychology Department, and Data Science Institute—will create new approaches for analyzing social media content moderation, neurological signals of political bias, the relationship between political polarization and dysfunction, and the effect of messaging on online information consumption and behavior.

Ultimately, Data & Democracy will build a community of scholars and students at the intersection of democracy and data science. Its launch was preceded by a series of informal networking events with interested faculty from across disciplines, which will continue this year for principal investigators, affiliates, and other campus partners. The initiative will recruit and hire affiliated postdoctoral scholars as well as student research support to further bolster this community and its research efforts. The initiative’s activities are also intertwined with existing programming housed at both CEG and DSI: Two of CEG’s four 2022 Senior Practitioner Fellows—Tiana Epps-Johnson and Mindy Finn—will focus their fellowship efforts on Data & Democracy, and several Data & Democracy affiliates (including faculty and fellows) are taking part in DSI’s 2022 Summer Lab program for undergraduate and graduate students, through mentorship, research projects, and events.

The initiative will engage directly and publicly with academic, non-profit, and private organizations and practitioners focused on fighting disinformation and other digital threats to democracy—strengthening the connections between interdisciplinary research and real-world application. In 2022-23, Data & Democracy will highlight these connections, as well as the results of its initial research projects and partnerships, through an innovative public Speaker Series, closed-door convenings hosted by Senior Practitioner Fellows, and more.
A core component of Data & Democracy is seeding new collaborations across the social and computational sciences aimed at producing cutting-edge research on topics critical to strengthening democracy in the digital age. At its launch in March 2022, the initiative funded the following four initial projects, led by 10 principal investigators from the University of Chicago.

UNDERSTANDING AND AUDITING CONTENT MODERATION POLICIES
Principal Investigators: Marshini Chetty, Computer Science; Chenhao Tan, Computer Science; Nick Feamster, Computer Science; Genevieve Lakier, Law

Internet and social media platforms face growing challenges in moderating the content posted by users, deploying a range of policies to find, flag, and remove offensive or inappropriate material. This study will combine computer science and law approaches to conduct an empirical study of the moderation policies and practices of platforms such as Youtube, Reddit, Facebook, and Etsy, creating the first public corpus of these policies and auditing how these systems are applied in real situations. The researchers will also conduct surveys and interviews to assess how users of these platforms perceive these policies and their expectations for how content rules will be enforced.

PARTISAN POLARIZATION AND POLITICAL DYSFUNCTION
Principal Investigators: William Howell, Political Science; Anthony Fowler, Public Policy; Andrew Eggers, Political Science; Chenhao Tan, Computer Science

Political polarization and dysfunction often occur together, but questions remain about the causal relationship between these phenomena. Does polarization produce government dysfunction, or do impediments to lawmaking propagate political extremism? This project will connect political scientists and computer scientists to evaluate and refine the understanding of this relationship through empirical investigations. Topics of interest include instances where the capacity of the state or a state office experience a sudden, exogenous shift in the ability to meet a policy challenge, and the downstream electoral consequences of changes in the constitutional design of an entire system of government. The research will also use natural language processing techniques to build new measures of candidate policy positions and speech.

UNDERSTANDING DIVERGENT INTERPRETATIONS OF POLITICAL INFORMATION
Principal Investigators: Yuan Chang Leong, Psychology; Daniel Grzenda, Data Science

The current atmosphere of politically polarized media has strengthened individuals’ political bias in how they interpret news and other information. Using a combination of methods from neuroscience, linguistics, and computer science, researchers will refine existing approaches for measuring political bias. fMRI studies will measure the neural responses of conservatives and liberals while watching political debates, while natural language processing methods will build predictive models of the types of content that increase these divergent brain responses. The results will help create interventions that combat messaging designed to further inflame polarization, facilitating healthier political discourse.

FACEBOOK MESSENGER CHATBOT FOR SURVEYS AND INTERVENTION TESTING
Principal Investigators: Molly Offer-Westort, Political Science; Nick Feamster, Computer Science

For many Internet users, Facebook is the portal to the Internet. Understanding how people consume and engage with information on Facebook is central to understanding how information and misinformation spreads on the Internet and shapes perspectives. Chatbots offer a promising new research tool for engaging with users within the context of their regular social media engagement. This project will develop a new Facebook Messenger chatbot that can be used for a variety of research uses: canvassing on a broad range of topics, measuring information consumption, or studying the effect of messaging interventions on political participation and behavior. The researchers will also use adaptive, data-driven algorithms that learn from exchanges with users and determine optimally persuasive messaging around political events.
AMERICAN POLITICS CONFERENCE
Spearheaded by three CEG faculty affiliates (Alexander Fouirnaies, Daniel Moskowitz, and Adam Zelizer), CEG hosted its inaugural American Politics Conference in June 2022. The two-day academic symposium was attended by more than 30 scholars—including both University of Chicago faculty and graduate researchers and emerging leaders in the field from across the country—and featured discussions and presentations focused on enduring themes of American democracy, including elections, lobbying, design of political institutions, accountability, and representation. Topics covered, such as minority voting patterns and the impacts of election fraud allegations and judicial diversity, are particularly relevant to current political discourse in the U.S. The conference reflected the diversity and cutting-edge expertise from the field of American politics: more than half of conference attendees were women and people of color, and presenters and discussants held appointments at universities including Harvard, Princeton, Emory, and the University of California Davis, among others.

NOT ANOTHER POLITICS PODCAST
Not Another Politics Podcast, produced in partnership with the Harris School and hosted by CEG faculty affiliates Wioletta Dziuda, Anthony Fowler, and CEG Director William Howell, has continued to expand in both scope and reach. The podcast delves into important and timely political research on democracy: it leverages rigorous, evidence-based scholarship rather than opinion or punditry, featuring interviews with paper authors and lively discussion of political science literature. In 2021-22, 22 new episodes of Not Another Politics Podcast were released, garnering more than 60,000 unique listeners from 155 countries and 150,000 total downloads—a more than 50 percent increase over the previous year. This year’s episodes covered papers on numerous timely topics, including: polarization and political extremism, COVID policy, infrastructure investment, Supreme Court precedent, the war in Ukraine, filibuster reform, ranked-choice voting, income inequality, and more.

CROSS-ATLANTIC DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE
CEG, together with the Chicago Center on Democracy (CCD) and the University of Chicago’s International Institute of Research in Paris (UC-IIRP), continues to build a cross-Atlantic network of scholars and practitioners devoted to the study of democracy, in response to alarming trends of democratic governance under threat across the globe. From multiple continents, the coalition will bring together a diverse group of experts with deep knowledge about the vulnerabilities of democracy and the political forces that, by turns, reinforce and undermine its expansion. In November 2021, the centers co-hosted a virtual exploration of bureaucratic resistance to global autocratic ambitions for over 100 viewers, featuring 11 experts with panels focused on Latin America, Eastern Europe, and global lessons. An in-person academic conference hosted in Paris in November 2022 will feature presentations and roundtable discussions on topics such as democracy in international politics, democracy in Ukraine, and the role of grassroots activism in global democratic reform. Increasingly innovative and ambitious activities, such as subsequent conferences, edited and published paper collections, working groups, and ongoing convenings, will take place at both the University of Chicago and the UC-IIRP.

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP, DIRECT FUNDING, AND RESEARCH SUPPORT
CEG consistently elevates academic research and recommendations on government reform closely tied to the national dialogue on pressing issues and current events—from government accountability to filibuster reform—across the Center’s public platforms and in the media. Work and expertise from CEG’s faculty affiliates has been featured this year in AP, USA Today, Christian Science Monitor, MSNBC, Crain’s Chicago Business, and more. CEG also continues to provide funds directly to our faculty affiliates at the Harris School for a variety of research initiatives that advance the study of our governing institutions and norms. This year, these included studies of American public opinion and interactions between legislators and the federal bureaucracy. CEG also supports affiliated faculty with recruiting and hiring research assistants to support their ongoing research efforts.
Effecting meaningful reform supported by research and expertise will require establishing urgency, a shared understanding of the challenges facing democracy, and a network of trust across the reform community. In 2021-22, CEG’s engagement efforts focused on deepening relationships with critical stakeholders and creating spaces for productive dialogue, collaboration, and partnership.
THE 2022 FELLOWS ARE:

Tiana Epps-Johnson: Civic Technologist; Founder and Executive Director, Center for Tech and Civic Life

Mindy Finn: Civic Entrepreneur and Political Operative; Founder and CEO, Citizen Data; former GOP Campaign Strategist

Liz Hempowicz: Government Transparency and Accountability Expert; Director of Public Policy, The Project on Government Oversight (POGO)

Rudy Mehrbani: Government Personnel Expert; Senior Director of the Governance Program, Democracy Fund; former Director, White House Presidential Personnel Office and Assistant to President Barack Obama

In February, CEG announced its second cohort of Senior Practitioner Fellows with a cohort rollout that garnered more than 25,000 social media impressions, nearly 3,000 video views, and mention in Politico’s DC and Illinois publications. In the face of increased democratic instability in America, this cohort of fellows has dedicated their work to increasing government accountability, combating corruption and polarization, and strengthening election security and trust—work they will continue during their tenure at the Center.
RESTORING TRUST IN DEMOCRACY

Election infrastructure in the United States is crumbling, says Senior Practitioner Fellow Tiana Epps-Johnson, and, even worse, election officials are increasingly being attacked simply for doing their jobs. How can the country rebuild trust in its local and national elections? At TED 2022, Epps-Johnson announces the launch of the US Alliance for Election Excellence, a nonpartisan collaborative of election officials, technologists, designers and other experts that will work across all 50 states to improve the performance of systems serving 240 million voters, ensuring everyone has access to a fair, trustworthy and modern democratic process.

Meanwhile, as organizations across the political spectrum focus on restoring trust in elections and promoting pragmatic candidates and policies ahead of upcoming elections, dynamic tools and robust collaboration are needed to combat disinformation and develop trust-building messages that resonate with voters. Senior Practitioner Fellow Mindy Finn and her team at Citizen Data are doing just that. They created the ElectProtect Dashboard—an innovative, accessible dashboard that provides users with voter mapping, messaging insights, and the latest election- and democracy-related research—and the Democracy Communications Collaborative—a new practitioner-funder partnership that aims to dramatically enhance communications, research and “listening” competencies, audience targeting, narrative development, and storytelling in order to help partners build support for democracy.

BRINGING OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO CONGRESS

Though particular reforms aimed at improving transparency and accountability within the federal government don’t always attract banner headlines, progress is often made through careful advocacy and expert testimony before Congressional committees. This year, Congress heard testimony from Senior Practitioner Fellows Rudy Mehrbani and Liz Hempowicz regarding laws to strengthen the independence of inspectors general and whistleblowers and filling gaps in legislative branch inspectors general coverage and coordination.

Most recently, Hempowicz also testified before the House Administration Committee as they examined proposals and ways to hold congressional lawmakers accountable for their stock trades and sales. Hempowicz offered a number of recommendations on how Congress could improve the 2012 Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge (STOCK) Act, which prohibits lawmakers with stocks from using non-public information obtained in their professional capacity for personal gain.
Senior Practitioner Fellow Tiana Epps-Johnson, a former Obama Foundation Fellow, embraces former US President Barack Obama after introducing his keynote address at Stanford’s one-day symposium, “Challenges to Democracy in the Digital Information Realm.”

Subsequent programming aimed at uplifting the reform work of the fellows and their affiliated organizations, expanding the network of practitioners engaged with CEG, and connecting the work of the fellows to scholarship driven and curated by the Center, will continue through winter 2022-23.

CLOSED-DOOR CONVENINGS AND WORKING GROUPS

An important component of CEG’s theory of action is bringing together experts from the reform space—often across differences in ideology, approach, and sector—either to add nuance and further understanding of particular reform issues, or to augment coordination and information sharing within the broader reform movement. As a nonpartisan, academic institution with a network of expert affiliates and convening power, CEG has a unique ability to assemble key stakeholders for candid conversations in service of government reform and strengthening democracy.

These private gatherings, including a mix of recurring partners—faculty, researchers, advocates, practitioners, and funders—as well as the most important, expert voices on particular topics, facilitate the sharing of knowledge and strengthen bonds between those analyzing and advancing reform.

Following the success of several initial convenings led by CEG Senior Practitioner Fellows in 2021 and 2022, we plan to redouble our efforts this year by hosting a series of convenings, salon discussions, and working groups to disseminate the latest scholarship on critical reform topics, identify promising reforms, and create a robust and enduring network of democracy stakeholders. Ultimately, these working groups will produce summaries of their findings to be released publicly through CEG’s communication channels.

Fellows engage a community of students, faculty, and practitioners through public events, closed-door discussions, informal networking, and mentorship. To kick off their work, CEG hosted an introductory series of events in March, including a hybrid “Meet the Fellows” panel discussion and a private “Lunch N’ Learn” for 30 University of Chicago students. This spring, Fellow Rudy Mehrbani joined CEG and Democracy Fund to host “What Comes Next for the Supreme Court?”, a timely conversation on the state of the court and the potential for reforms in the wake of the court’s reversal of Roe v. Wade, its appointment of the first Black female justice, and growing distrust in the institution. These events allow students and members of the community to learn from the fellows’ experience and expertise while delving deeper into the issues the fellows are most passionate about. Fellows also held spring office hours, allowing students to engage in intimate one-on-one conversations with a fellow of their choosing. In addition to their work with the Center more broadly, Epps-Johnson and Finn are affiliated with CEG’s collaborative Data & Democracy Initiative with the University’s Data Science Institute, and support the engagement and research efforts of the initiative.
MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS
CEG leverages partnerships with media outlets both locally and nationally to provide quality forums for elevating the issues of—and potential solutions to—government ineffectiveness to a wider audience of citizens and change-makers. Given the need to break down silos of information and reach a broad audience, CEG partners with far-reaching and trusted platforms for experts and affiliates to disseminate new ideas as well as foster dialogue that leads to positive change.

Rethinking Our Democracy
Building on the success of its initial joint essay series in partnership with Protect Democracy (a national nonprofit advocacy organization) and the Washington Post’s Monkey Cage blog, CEG released its second installment of Rethinking Our Democracy essays examining challenges facing the federal bureaucracy. Scholars (from University of Virginia, Vanderbilt, Stanford, and University of Chicago) and advocacy experts (from Protect Democracy, the Project on Government Oversight, and the Democracy Fund) explored the topics of regulation, federal vacancies, strength of the administrative state, bureaucratic oversight, and civil service in explanatory articles that attracted significant attention from thought leaders and other partners in the reform space. This second set of essays garnered a 75% increase in engagement and 300% increase in reach on social media over the series’ first installment. Additionally, a briefing on federal vacancies reform featuring series authors hosted by CEG and its partners attracted more than 70 Congressional staff, government officials, and members of the press.

Re-Imagine Chicago
CEG partnered with Chicago’s NPR affiliate WBEZ to publish an extended multimedia series, Re-Imagine Chicago, in summer 2021. With the city’s recovery from the pandemic offering an opportunity to rethink the nature and strength of Chicago’s civic institutions and consider alternative ideas for reform, the series featured conversations and explorations of four key institutional areas critical to Chicago: city government, community investment, public safety, and schooling. Weekly radio segments covered ward-based elections, collective bargaining, the design of the police reform efforts, the powers of the mayor’s office, and more. This 16-week multi-episode, website, and four-event series engaged thousands of community members, scholars, and public officials to re-examine the structures and institutions that shape civic life in Chicago.

Looking forward
CEG will continue to cultivate partners in media to uplift critical topics and issues deserving public attention. A third explanatory series with Protect Democracy and the Washington Post’s Monkey Cage blog on US electoral design and systems reform is planned for 2022-23, and development of a new locally-focused series on city council design ahead of the 2023 Chicago municipal elections is already underway.
Re-Imagine Chicago Capstone Event
This culminating event to CEG’s multi-part series with WBEZ brought together a panel of Chicago leaders and experts to dive deeply into Chicago’s challenges and solutions proposed during the series. The hybrid event featured live dialogue with University affiliates and an art exhibition by a local artist exploring themes from the series.

Helene Gayle, then-President and CEO of the Chicago Community Trust, discusses issues of community disinvestment at the Re-Imagine Chicago Capstone Event. Other panelists included Illinois Deputy Governor for Education Martin Torres, then-Inspector General for Chicago Joseph Ferguson, and Chicago Public Health Commissioner Allison Arwady.

Events with Partners
Given the numerous voices and organizations with expertise and a stake in issues of government reform and democracy, CEG makes every effort to produce high-quality events together with partners that highlight synergies across the University and across the reform space.

The Democracy Series
As the future of democracy itself is fiercely debated in writing and efforts to undermine democratic institutions persist around the world, CEG brought together University experts from CEG and the Chicago Center on Democracy (CCD) with an internationally-renowned book-seller—the Chicago-based Seminary Co-op Bookstores—to produce The Democracy Series. An initiative of public events featuring dialogue between book authors and experts on issues related to the state of democracy in the U.S. and abroad, The Democracy Series launched in September 2021 and hosted six virtual and two hybrid events in 2021-22. The series brought experts on compulsory voting, international populism, global democratic history, and more—from institutions like Harvard University, New York University and the Carnegie Endowment—into conversation with CEG and CCD scholars in front of hundreds of audience-members throughout the year.

Other Events
Through collaborations with internal and external partners like the University of Chicago Alumni Relations and Development, the Democracy Fund, Protect Democracy, and the Chicago Center on Democracy, we have hosted numerous events this year to advance discussion of key reform topics in the public sphere. These events delved into topics such as the future of and potential reforms to the US Supreme Court, building a diverse coalition for democracy, US foreign policy and world standing, and more, featuring both practitioners and scholarly experts.
Improving government effectiveness and strengthening democracy will not happen overnight; it is the task of a generation. Supporting the next generation of civic leaders, emerging scholars, and students in pursuit of rigorous solutions to those challenges is critical to the success of the reform movement—and a fundamental part of our deep connection to the University of Chicago. \textit{This year, we re-ignited in-person leadership development, expanded student engagement offerings, and infused into our education work even more explicit connections between real-world policy challenges and the structural deficiencies that underpin them.}
CIVIC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

Since its inception, CEG has served as the organizational home to the Civic Leadership Academy, which was launched in 2014 in partnership with the Harris School of Public Policy and University of Chicago Office of Civic Engagement. CLA has grown to be a highly selective interdisciplinary leadership development program designed to develop a diverse pipeline of talented leaders to help Chicago nonprofits and government agencies—institutions and organizations critical to the city’s civic infrastructure—thrive.

CLA develops individual fellows and, in turn, broader organizations committed to building and strengthening local Chicago communities. CLA fellows—an annual cohort of 30 high-potential leaders of nonprofit organizations and government agencies that serve residents and communities across the city of Chicago and Cook County, but (both in the number of organizations and those organizations’ focus) have a significant presence in the historically underserved communities on Chicago’s South and West sides.

Annual signature events, including CLA Soirée in September 2021 for all program alumni and the CLA Welcome Ceremony and Graduation Ceremonies commemorating the newest cohort of fellows, returned to an in-person or hybrid format in 2021-22. These events featured a range of speakers, from University President A. Paul Alivisatos (AB’81) and Harris School Dean Katherine Baicker to CLA alumni and graduating fellows, who highlighted the breadth of experience and wisdom of the CLA community.

In addition to signature events and supplementing the program’s core curriculum, CEG hosted several Civic Practitioner Leadership Series (CPLS) events. These discussions with notable speakers and CLA alumni, exclusive to the CLA community and off the record, are intended to provide insight on leadership in the community and offer fellows networking opportunities, and engaged more than 300 attendees over six sessions.

Civic Leadership Academy fellows from both the classes of 2022 and 2021 traveled to Paris to participate in the Global Practicum experience, which was canceled in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the weeklong immersive experience, fellows travel together to meet with their counterparts in Paris civic nonprofit and government leadership positions and participate in a mix of information-sharing, international dialogue, cultural exchange, and cohort bonding. This year, fellows participated in site visits to local and national government agencies such as the Conseil D’Etat and the Paris Department of Public Health, as well as non-profit organizations working in housing, arts and culture, social services, and more.

In recent years, CLA has increasingly focused on positioning fellows as stewards of bold ideas for structural change and improving the capacity of institutions to solve the public problems fellows grapple with daily. In 2022, this included a culminating assignment for fellows to explore a structural challenge facing Chicago in more depth and propose a series of institutional reforms to address the challenge. These explorations—covering a wide range of topics from supporting student transitions to post-secondary education opportunities, identifying employment opportunities for Chicago youth, reforming judicial elections, expanding equitable access to clean water, and streamlining processes for waste management—were presented privately to the cohort and numerous CLA alumni at the culmination of the program.

CLA fellows and alumni often collaborate closely with our partners at the Harris School, and CEG has intentionally built direct relationships between CLA fellows and students: CLA fellows and alumni—and their work on behalf of Chicago—are often featured in a written pieces at the Harris School, and fellows frequently take part in orientation and mentorship panels, as well as partner events across the University.

CEG engages in a robust application and recruitment process for the Civic Leadership Academy, aiming to recruit a diverse and representative pool of applicants with promising futures in local civic leadership. The process, which includes numerous virtual information sessions, informal networking events, targeted social media campaigns, and robust alumni outreach, aims to garner significant interest in the program across Chicago’s civic sector and ensure a large pool of applicants in the fall.

Now entering its ninth year, CLA has over 240 fellows in leadership positions at over 100 government and non-profit agencies. Since its inception, CLA has been dedicated to building cohorts that reflect Chicago’s rich racial diversity: 60% of all CLA fellows are leaders of color. CLA fellows represent organizations that serve all neighborhoods and communities across the city of Chicago and Cook County, but (both in the number of organizations and those organizations’ focus) have a significant presence in the historically underserved communities on Chicago’s South and West sides.

Since its inception, CEG has served as the organizational home to the Civic Leadership Academy, which was launched in 2014 in partnership with the Harris School of Public Policy and University of Chicago Office of Civic Engagement. CLA has grown to be a highly selective interdisciplinary leadership development program designed to develop a diverse pipeline of talented leaders to help Chicago nonprofits and government agencies—institutions and organizations critical to the city’s civic infrastructure—thrive. CLA fellows—an annual cohort of 30 high-potential leaders of nonprofit organizations and government agencies that serve residents and communities across the city of Chicago and Cook County—engage in six months of leadership development programming and instruction with renowned UChicago faculty designed to challenge fellows to analyze organizational best practices, community impact, and institutional reform in the city of Chicago and beyond.

CLA’s Global Practicum returned in February and March 2022 after a pandemic hiatus as fellows traveled to Paris for an immersive experience of cohort bonding and meeting with peer organizations abroad.
CIVIC LEADERS AS REFORMERS
Civic Leadership Academy fellows are not just capable leaders in their own right; they are stewards of institutional reform and structural change within their organizations, and across their community. During their fellowship, teams of fellows explored a structural challenge facing Chicago in more depth and proposed a series of reforms to address the challenge.

CREATING A STRONGER PIPELINE FOR CHICAGO STUDENTS
Despite the existence of a robust local public community college system, City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago Public School students often do not take advantage of it, leaving too many students without a clear path to further post-secondary education and formative careers. To better integrate the two school systems, fellows explored how to tie underperforming public high schools to City Colleges schools more closely together by aligning curriculum, offering opportunities to earn college credit, and creating direct enrollment pathways. Drawing on examples from other major US cities, this stronger institutional connection would enable high school students to more seamlessly transition to post-secondary education, saving students time and effort while helping to improve career outcomes.

STREETS AND SANITATION CONTRACT REFORM
In Chicago, most materials that end up in landfills could be diverted as compost, and Chicago alone wastes 55 million pounds of food per month. However, current city contracts with private waste haulers do not include requirements or incentives to divert compostable waste. To address this challenge, fellows proposed a new process for how Chicago’s Department of Streets and Sanitation might conduct its waste management contract bid solicitation and monitor performance against contract requirements, led by Chicago’s Chief Sustainability Officer and a diverse advisory board representing key stakeholders. The board would propose environmental sustainability and public health criteria for waste contracts—including, for instance, targets for waste diversion rates—and would review existing city contracts to assess their environmental and public health impacts.

CIVIC LEADERS AS MENTORS
The Civic Leadership Academy experience extends far beyond a fellow’s participation in their six-month fellowship. Fellows and alumni engage with each other across cohort years, sectors, and areas of expertise to maintain a strong network rooted in mentorship and support. Fellows and alumni often have the opportunity to share words of wisdom and important perspective with each other at signature events throughout the year.

Reflections (from my time in CLA) helped me rewrite how I approached the idea of what meaningful work looked like: creating space for me to own that I had valid experiences, cultural cues, and knowledge and that made me be my best self—and most importantly helped me to ignore and shake off those messages I had been inundated with early and often in my career. Namely, that I was too Black, too invested, too independent, too partial, while simultaneously saying I was too much and not enough”.

- Angela Rudolph (CLA’18), welcoming the newest cohort of 2022 CLA fellows

Through CLA, we have engaged in the process of unlocking doors, opening them, and getting to see what this city is made of, how it operates, and to see a future where others can learn from what we are doing in our organizations, Cook County, and the City of Chicago. We engaged in the process of looking not only at the direction of the city, but looking at how we got here. We set out on a journey to identify and define leadership—together”.

- Dennericka Brooks (CLA’22), reflects on the Civic Leadership Academy experience at Graduation 2022
EXECUTIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

Based on the overwhelming success of the Civic Leadership Academy, CEG has worked to expand training and executive-level educational opportunities to civic professionals within specific organizations and in other broader contexts. Through these offerings, like through the Civic Leadership Academy, CEG strives to break down silos between leaders within or across sectors and areas of expertise while infusing rigorous debate, open dialogue, proven leadership approaches, and a lens of institutional improvement into the fabric of these organizations and the civic sector more broadly. For instance, in 2021-22, CEG led a two-day intensive workshop for leaders of a Chicago-area government agency, attended by key officials and staff within the department. Going forward, CEG plans to continue offering customized executive education programming to interested parties.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Students are an invaluable part of the CEG community, providing a pool of talent, expertise, and passion for issues of institutional reform and strengthening democracy. CEG strives to engage this community through robust programming and regular communication. We host student-focused events across our initiatives and publicize these events to students through web, email, and social media outreach.

For instance, CEG’s Senior Practitioner Fellows continue to host a set of regular office hours and periodic workshops for University of Chicago students to interact directly with the fellows, engage in their work with the Center, and seek mentorship. CEG also helps faculty affiliates and fellows seeking to leverage students for research or project support, either through paid research assistantships or other periodic opportunities. CEG continues to provide meaningful opportunities for graduate and undergraduate students to work directly in support of CEG’s work throughout the school year. In 2021-22, two graduate assistants and three undergraduate interns contributed extensive operational support to the Center and its programming. These opportunities also provide a pipeline for continued engagement with the Center, either formally or informally: since inception, three graduating Harris School students who served as part-time graduate assistants have gone on to hold full-time roles at CEG.

UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS

CEG remains a valued partner at the Harris School and across campus to strengthen and support the University’s broader efforts, and increase students’ exposure to CEG’s mission, work, and affiliates. At Harris, CEG affiliates are an integral part of the Harris Mentorship Program and mentoring programming for UChicago undergraduate policy students.

CEG serves as the link between our affiliates and partner organizations and the Harris Career Development Office and Student Affairs. CEG affiliate organizations are eager to share new job postings with Harris students and alumni, and we look forward to building on these relationships with external hiring partners further. We have also been proud to partner with Harris Diversity and Inclusion programming as CEG affiliates have served as speakers and participants in social justice and equity events in Chicago and beyond. CEG continues to partner with the Harris Student Recruitment and Global Outreach Team on various recruitment-related programming.

Across the University of Chicago, we maintain close working relationships with the Institute of Politics, the Office of Civic Engagement, the Chicago Center on Democracy, and the Data Science Institute, and CEG has been featured in campus-wide conversations hosted by the UChicago Alumni Relations and Development.

STUDENTS ARE AN INVALUABLE PART OF THE CEG COMMUNITY, PROVIDING A POOL OF TALENT, EXPERTISE, AND PASSION.

Second-year graduate assistant Delon Lemelle reviews remarks with CEG Executive Director Sadia Sindhu prior to an event for The Democracy Series, May 2022.

University of Chicago President A. Paul Alivisatos (AB’81) welcomes the 2022 Civic Leadership Academy cohort.
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