

illiberalism

Studies Program

Call for Conference Papers

The Illiberal International

The Illiberalism Studies Program at the George Washington University will host a conference on **Thursday, October 23, 2024** on the topic of the transnational links of illiberalism.

Around the world today, anti-democratic and anti-liberal political formations are gaining influence, and sometimes even state power. In the US, a rejection of philosophical and political liberalism has cut deep, fostering a slew of attacks on liberal principles and institutions ranging from free speech, independent courts, and of course the democratic transfer of power, as evidenced by the pro-Trump “Stop the Steal” movement and the January 6th insurrection.

In Europe, Giorgia Meloni, Viktor Orbán, Marine Le Pen, and Jarosław Kaczyński are leading figures inside a growing “illiberal International” that rejects liberal immigration regimes, liberal social mores, and most potently liberal political institutions. In India, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its head, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, are pushing the country ever closer to their desired Hindu-supremacist state. In Latin America, Javier Milei and Jair Bolsonaro have pushed the limits of their respective countries’ democracies, too. Still other regimes, such as Russia and China, are forwarding their own alternative programs to the liberal project.

The examples above are only a shortlist of what characterizes the global assault on liberal values that were once taken for granted. They should not be treated as isolated cases or even regional phenomena, but rather as part of an international trend wherein illiberal actors are increasingly finding common cause with one another to affect their strategic aims and political preferences both at home and abroad. Through inter-party and interpersonal relationships, conferences, and caucuses, the international illiberal movement is increasingly looking beyond the narrow scope of national interests to form stronger movements that result in both intellectual and material assistance to each other.

By exploring these transnational aspects, we can understand how illiberal initiatives, ideas, and actors transcend national borders and find a receptive audience; what vision illiberal actors have for society in the coming months and years; and what they share and borrow from each other to achieve their aims. Suggested topics for this conference include: institutional and personal international links, shared intellectual genealogies and cultures, collective action strategies, international religious and pro-traditional families networks.

Articles resulting from the conference will be published as a special issue in the Open Access, peer-reviewed [Journal of Illiberalism Studies](#).

Please submit a title and a 250-word abstract to illibstudies@gwu.edu by March 1, 2024. Successful candidates will be notified by March 20, 2024. Travel, accommodation, and visa expenses will be covered.

