Belt, Road, and Beyond

The CSIS Belt and Road Executive Course

About the Course

Get a master’s-level introduction to the fast-moving global infrastructure story, including China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and U.S. and allied responses. In this updated version of one of CSIS’s most popular executive courses, scholars from its Economics Program and leading experts in the field will illuminate the myths and facts about BRI and U.S.-led initiatives such as the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) and Blue Dot Network, and describe how these initiatives are impacting commercial and strategic realities on the ground.

Register Online

Applicants are admitted on a rolling basis.
## Sample Course Schedule

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<td>Welcome &amp; Introductions</td>
<td>The View from China: BRI, Development, and Influence</td>
<td>Host Country Views on Foreign Infrastructure Development</td>
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<td>9 AM</td>
<td>Myths and Facts about BRI</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
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<td>Infrastructure Contracts, Finance, and Debt: U.S. and China Approaches</td>
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<td>How BRI Has Changed Over Time</td>
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<td>Simulation</td>
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<td>12 PM</td>
<td>NETWORKING LUNCH</td>
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<td>1 PM</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
<td>What Makes a Project Bankable?</td>
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<td>2 PM</td>
<td>The Digital Silk Road</td>
<td>NETWORKING LUNCH</td>
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<td>BRI in Context: South Asia and the Pacific Islands</td>
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<td>Key Takeaways and Closing Remarks</td>
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<td>Reception with CSIS Experts and Network</td>
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**Myths and Facts About BRI**
Popular descriptions of the Belt & Road Initiative (BRI) abound with colorful characterizations, from a Chinese version of the Marshall Plan to the return of the ancient Silk Road. This introductory session describes the origins and realities of BRI while dispelling several popular misconceptions.

**How BRI Has Changed Over Time**
Initially conceived as one of the most ambitious infrastructure projects in history, BRI has encountered several challenges and has been streamlined and refocused in recent years. Learn how BRI has evolved from its 2013 debut to now.

**The Digital Silk Road**
China’s Digital Silk Road continues to expand in the wake of Covid-19 due to a combination of internal and international political pressures and economic incentives. Explore these dynamics, the scope of China’s digital footprint, and the future of China’s technology exports along the BRI.

**BRI in Context: Africa**
Weigh the need to balance responses to the strategic risks of Chinese projects with local development imperatives in Africa, home to the first Chinese overseas naval base. Identify overarching regional issues as well as recent developments and trends during the Covid-19 pandemic and plans for a post-pandemic recovery.

**The View from China: BRI, Development, And Influence**
Chinese President Xi Jinping sees BRI, along with a new Global Development Initiative, as major components of China’s foreign policy, bringing necessary development finance to countries in need and expanding the country’s influence from East Asia to Europe. Hear views from Chinese scholars on the importance of these initiatives to China.
Infrastructure Contracts, Finance, and Debt: U.S. and China Approaches

Many emerging economies have turned to foreign loans and complex agreements to finance their infrastructure investment. Opaque lending practices – amplified by Covid-19, supply chain disruptions, the strengthening dollar and rising interest rates, and the Russian war in Ukraine – have raised concerns about debt sustainability. Acquire new tools to examine the consequences for recipient countries contending with financing options from competing sources.

What Makes a Project Bankable?

Government infrastructure initiatives frequently focus on combining support from multilateral development banks and development finance institutions with mobilizing private sector capital into overseas projects. However, many of these projects have significant risk and are not considered "bankable," a key requisite for investment. Learn how government policies can support bankability.

The U.S. and Allied Partners Toolkit

The U.S. is sharpening its toolkit for delivering infrastructure projects abroad, deploying governmental institutions such as the U.S. Development Finance Corporation (DFC), the U.S. Export-Import Bank (ExIm), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Advanced countries have announced several initiatives to counter BRI, including the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII), Blue Dot Network, and Global Gateway. Review the suite of tools, initiatives, and institutions that the United States has at its disposal to compete in the global infrastructure game.

Mobilizing Private Sector Capital

U.S. pension, insurance, and other funds have trillions of dollars of capital looking for reliable long-term returns. Mobilizing this private capital is the organizing principle of many U.S. government initiatives to support global investment. But where the public sector sees strategic value and opportunity to address critical needs, the private sector sees high risks, potentially unviable projects, and economies rife with corruption. Explore tools and incentives to foster more private sector engagement.
Host Country Views on Foreign Infrastructure Investment
Hear views from a former developing country government official with experience assessing project proposals from China, the United States, and other donors. Learn more about the factors that went into selecting projects and how host countries balance the need for speed in developing their economies and the desire for high-quality, “clean” investment.

Simulation Exercise
Utilize the knowledge and insight gained to test newly acquired skills in a half-day simulation exercise designed by experts in global infrastructure investment and U.S.-China economic competition.
About the CSIS Economics Program

The Economics Program leads the Center's work on international economic policy, global economic governance, and the domestic economic foundations of U.S. power. The program is directed by Matthew P. Goodman, CSIS Senior Vice President and Simon Chair in Political Economy.

About CSIS

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) is a bipartisan, nonprofit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. founded by David M. Abshire and Admiral Arleigh Burke in 1962. For over 50 years, CSIS has been dedicated to developing practical solutions to some of the world’s greatest challenges. Voted the world’s number one defense and national security think tank for the past eight years, CSIS has become one of the preeminent international policy institutions focused on defense and security, regional stability, and transnational challenges ranging from energy and climate to global development and economic integration. Tom Pritzker, executive chairman of Hyatt Hotels Corporation and chairman and CEO of the Pritzker Organization, became chairman of the CSIS Board of Trustees in November 2015. Former senator Sam Nunn (D-GA), who served as chair for 16 years, remains on the Board as chairman emeritus. John J. Hamre became the Center’s president and chief executive officer in April 2000.