

2024 Annual Report Highlights



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In 2024, the 21st Century China Center advanced its mission to lead research, policy engagement, and U.S.-China exchange. Our scholars produced impactful research, hosted key discussions and strengthened academic ties with Chinese counterparts. Here are the highlights from this year.

The China Forum goes to Washington

In January, we launched the Washington China Forum, engaging D.C. policymakers in U.S.-China relations. Attendees included present and past national security advisors Jake Sullivan, Tom Donilon and Stephen Hadley, as well as Congressmen Andy Kim (D-NJ) and Michael Waltz (R-FL), Senator Dan Sullivan (R-AK), businessman Steve Schwarzman and the former World Bank president Robert Zoellick.

Building on this success, we plan to institutionalize the Washington China Forum as an annual event, in partnership with the Council on Foreign Relations.

In August, China Forum in La Jolla convened its largest bipartisan group yet. We distilled 13 [Key Takeaways](#), including a set of consensus principles, from the summer forum.



The Task Force and policy papers address U.S.-China relations

The Task Force on U.S.-China Policy is preparing a "transition memo" on future U.S.-China policy, an effort led by Susan Shirk and Rick Waters. In the past year, we released [five policy papers](#), including a report by Victor Shih on China's local government debt, which garnered 102,000 views on Twitter/X, and a study by a history Ph.D. student, Amanda DeMarco, on the origins of the 1979 U.S.-China S&T Agreement.



The China Data Lab expands its research impact

[The China Data Lab \(CDL\)](#) continued to support empirical research with datasets that were used by scholars at UC San Diego, New York University, Princeton, the University of Hong Kong and others. CDL added new data sources, including WeChat and Xiaohongshu, to gain insights into Chinese social, political and economic trends. A renewed grant from the Carnegie Corporation will fund CDL's ongoing projects.

Scholars at the center published over 23 articles this year on topics including industrial policy, media control and

authoritarian governance. Notably, Molly Roberts and Ruixue Jia examined U.S.-China tensions and their effect on scientific collaboration, while Michael Davidson provided insights into China's energy transition. Victor Shih, the center's director, published new research on loyalty and institutional norms in China's leadership. All have seen their publications in the prestigious Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

In 2024, we began releasing more datasets for open research use, including our regular "China from the Ground Up" surveys, which garnered 19 formal requests in six months, from January to June 2024.



The center also organized four conferences on critical topics, including China's low-carbon transition and social challenges. Michael Davidson led two workshops on climate and U.S.-China relations, engaging over 20 organizations in China.

New faculty, nonresident scholars and visiting scholars join 21CCC

In 2024, the center welcomed Guoer Liu, assistant professor in political science, and professor Ping Zhu, a transnational Chinese literature expert who also serves as editor-in-chief of the journal Chinese Literature and Thought Today. We also added several [nonresident scholars](#), including Ji Li from UC Irvine, Yan Long from UC Berkeley and Mike Chinoy, former CNN bureau chief in Beijing. The center also hosted twelve [visiting graduate students or scholars](#) from leading Chinese universities, including Fudan, Peking, Tsinghua, Renmin, and Sun Yat-sen universities.



Public programming continues robust engagement



In 2024, the center hosted [20 public lectures](#) and [19 research workshops](#), as well as a series of Chinese-language salons on Chinese art and culture organized by professor Liang Lei. Our 17 event

videos drew over 70,000 views, with the highest engagement on discussions of U.S.-China relations.

Student engagement and support expand

The center continued to support the [China Focus student magazine](#), amplifying young voices on U.S.-China relations. Our summer youth program united high school students from the U.S. and China for an intensive, collaboration-focused experience. Additionally, we launched a travel grant program for graduate students and postdocs in China studies to present their research at conferences.



In 2024, the Center awarded key fellowships, including the 21st Century China Center Fellowship, the Ambassador Diana Lady Dougan Fellowship, the Dr. Shao-Chi Lin and Lily Y. Lin Endowed Fellowship, and three Ichimore Student Research Awards for Ph.D. students. [Our summer student research program](#), generously supported by Dr. Junling Sun, a member of the center's advisory board, employed over a dozen research assistants, enhancing student engagement and professional development.

Looking ahead to 2025

Next year, the center will expand partnerships with leading China-focused think tanks and host a January summit to coordinate research on China's challenges to the U.S. This initiative will strengthen the center's role in U.S.-China policy research, public engagement and academic collaboration.