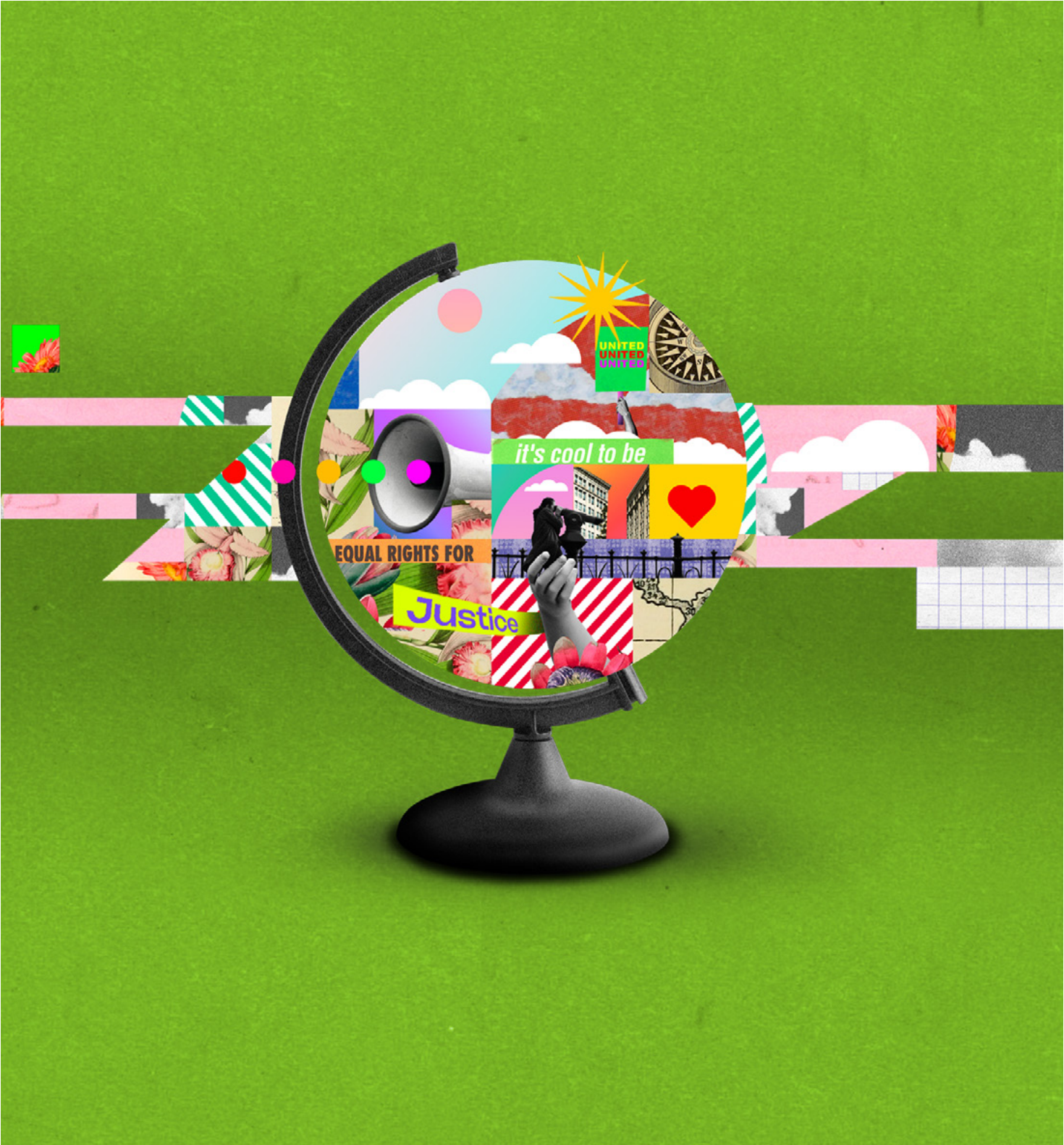


Annual Report



CONTENTS

Executive Director's introduction **1**

Reflections from the Chair **3**

Who we are **4**

Impact and reach **5**

My fellowship year **7**

AFSEE's educational programme **9**

Lifelong fellowship **11**

Events and communications **13**

Research and projects **16**

Partners **26**

Our Fellows **32**

AFSEE team **36**



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S INTRODUCTION

We live in a world of uncertainty as new and ongoing conflicts, climate-related disasters, and growing inequalities of wealth continue to create turmoil, violence, and polarisation. In these uncertain times, the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Programme continues its work to advance social and economic equity through bringing together research, education, and practice and building a community of changemakers who are committed to creating fairer, healthier, and more inclusive societies.



From our rigorous curriculum to our robust governance structures and innovative lifelong offerings, AFSEE continues to work with Fellows and colleagues across LSE, the Atlantic Fellows community, and beyond. We strive to remain an inclusive and welcoming space that fosters dialogue and critical thinking, and analysis.

In accordance with the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan, AFSEE is working to

advance four key goals and pillars of action:

- 1 Fellowship Experience:** to design and deliver a rigorous, interconnected, and innovative fellowship programme.
- 2 Lifelong Engagement:** to provide robust lifelong engagement opportunities for Senior Fellows.
- 3 Fellow and Programme Impact:** to support and strengthen the impact of AFSEE Fellows and to promote the visibility and reputation of the AFSEE Programme.
- 4 Global Networks and Partnerships:** to strengthen the AFSEE Programme's global connections and impact.

To achieve these goals, we have developed robust governance structures and have a strong operational team. Our work is informed and guided by the AFSEE Programme Charter. Below is a summary of some of the key highlights from the 2024/25 academic year.

OUR GOVERNANCE

The AFSEE Governing Board is led by the Chair, Dr Claire Gordon, and I am grateful to Claire for her wise counsel and support. I thank all the members of the AFSEE Governing Board for their time, advice, and support. The AFSEE Senior Fellow representative on the Board, Mohammed Anwar Sadat Adam (2020-21 Cohort) continues in the role, and I thank Anwar for his insightful contributions and dedication.

AFSEE's work is also supported by the Programme Committee, a consultative body that provides knowledge and expertise around key areas including curriculum, programming, and outreach. The Programme Committee is comprised of core team members, our learning partners, and Senior Fellows. This year we were joined by Raquel Jesse from our partner organisation, the Center on International Cooperation at New York University and Selam Bedada from our sister programme, the Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity. I would like to thank the outgoing Senior Fellow members of the 2024-25 Programme Committee for their hard work and service: Tracy Jooste (2017-18 Cohort) and Katy Rubin (2023-24 Cohort).

In November 2024, AFSEE hosted the in-person meeting of the Atlantic Institute Governing Board (AIGB). AIGB members met with AFSEE Board members and heard from four Senior Fellows about their leadership journeys. I thank Hobeth Martínez Carrillo (2019-20 Cohort), Irene Wakarindi (2020-21 Cohort), Ruby Hembrom (2021-22 Cohort) and Eko Octavianus (2023-24 Cohort) for coming to speak about their work and experience of being Senior Fellows.

afsee.atlanticfellows.lse.ac.uk

 Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity

 Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity

 @AFSEE_LSE

 @atlanticfellows_at_lse

OUR PROGRAMME

The eighth cohort of AFSEE Fellows started their fellowship experience in September 2024. The active fellowship experience is at the heart of the AFSEE Programme. The cohesive set of four modules are part of the year-long curriculum connecting to and building on each other to provide Fellows with new knowledge, skills, and opportunities for community building. We deliver content that challenges and changes Fellows, is useful to them, and which provides opportunities for collaboration.

Alongside the four modules, AFSEE also organised inter-module webinars focusing on the following topics:

- **October 2024:** “How to write an effective blog post”, delivered by Dan Nixon, the LSE International Inequalities Institute’s (III) Blog Editor.
- **November 2024:** “Demystifying quantitative approaches”, delivered by Dr Fabricio Mendes-Fialho, AFSEE team member.
- **January 2025:** “Ethics” webinar, delivered by Dr George Kunnath, AFSEE Academic Lead.
- **March 2025:** “Inclusive ethnography and qualitative research”, delivered by Dr Branwen Spector, UCL Department of Anthropology.
- **May 2025:** “Ignorance and power”, delivered by Dr Sarah Kerr, III Research Fellow.

In March 2025, we completed the recruitment of our ninth cohort for which we received a record 975 applications. For the third year in a row, the AFSEE Ambassador Programme supported the outreach, and the ambassadors worked on identifying and communicating with



AIGB members front row: Elizabeth Kiss, Lysa John, Armine Ishkanian, Nicolette Naylor, and Chris Oechsli. Back row: Kevin Liverpool, Amina Evangelista Swanepoel, Roger Glass, and Kofi Appenteng.

contacts in their regions and hosted a series of informational webinars. The AFSEE Ambassadors were:

- Caribbean - Kevin Liverpool (2021-22 Cohort)
- Central Asia - Hamid Vashaghanifarhani (2022-23 Cohort)
- Central and East Africa - Naledi Maite (2022-23 Cohort)
- Central and South America - Rafael Barrio de Mendoza Zevallos (2021-22 Cohort)
- Europe - Renata Ćuk (2018-19 Cohort)
- Middle East and North Africa – Manar Alzrai (2023-24 Cohort)
- Oceania - Eko Octavianus (2023-24 Cohort)
- Southern Africa - Mavis Koogotsitse (2023-24 Cohort)
- Southeast Asia - James Aung (2022-23 Cohort)
- West Africa - Makmid Kamara (2021-22 Cohort)

I thank the ambassadors for their stellar efforts.

As our Senior Fellows community grows each year, we are investing more resources to support the development and implementation of lifelong offerings to Senior Fellows. Some key highlights from this strand of work this year have been the

completion of the first round of AFSEE Incubation Labs and the launch of the second round. In 2024, AFSEE also launched the second round of Atlantic Equity Challenge projects aimed at supporting collaborations that bring together our Senior Fellows, LSE researchers, and other colleagues to conduct solutions-oriented projects.

LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING AHEAD

On the staffing front, 2024/25 was a year of transitions. While we bid farewell to three members of staff: Dr Aygen Kurt-Dickson (Policy Fellow); Julia Ryng (Programme Officer, Fellowship Experience); and Dr Fabricio Mendes Fialho (Research Fellow), we also welcomed Hala Haidar (Communications and Marketing Officer); Saara Honkanen (Programme Officer, Fellowship Experience); and Dr Giannis Efthymiou (Assistant Professorial Research Fellow in Innovative Pedagogy). I thank Aygen, Fabricio, and Julia for their work and wish them well in the next chapters of their career journeys.

Amidst the turmoil and uncertainty of the current state of the world, maintaining hope is not easy. And yet, despite the many adversities and obstacles facing them, AFSEE Fellows both individually and collectively continue to work towards creating a better future of peace, dignity, and equality for all.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE GOVERNING BOARD



Over the past academic year, the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Programme, its committed team of staff, its cohort of Current Fellows, and its growing community of Senior Fellows have once again demonstrated the special synergies that AFSEE makes possible. Given the challenging global, national, and local times we are currently living through, this could not be more important.

The Governing Board met twice this year: first online in January, then in-person at LSE in June. We welcomed three new Board members: Dr Irene Guijt, former Head of Evidence and Strategic Learning at Oxfam Great Britain; Professor Jenny Pearce, Visiting Professor at the LSE International Inequalities Institute (III); Professor Liz Stokoe from LSE's Psychological and Behavioural Science Department. The poetic and practical combination of their work on Peace, Hope, and Impact aptly embody the values of our AFSEE community, and it is a privilege to welcome these new members to the Board.

I am grateful for the commitment of the Governing Board members in

ensuring that AFSEE is progressing actively and ambitiously in its four key strategic priorities. We value the dynamic and inventive programming developments in all these different areas while offering appropriate challenge. This year we have also been having probing discussions about impact measurement and the duration of the programme, originally set up with funding for 20 years of programming.

It is a great honour for me to be Chair of the Board, to step away from my day job as Director of LSE's Eden Centre for Education Enhancement and enter a different space at LSE. This space shares some similar values, modelling the possibilities of the classroom as "the most radical space of possibility" (bell hooks) and taking this learning, experience, and expertise further into changemaking through AFSEE's work to reduce social and economic inequities.

I had the opportunity to attend the opening session of Module 3 on Challenging and Transforming Inequality. I was struck by the respect, understanding, and solidarity that has developed among this year's cohort. I was also struck by the interaction between the personal and the political, the

local and the global in the contexts in which the Fellows are living, striving for change, and understanding at the present time.

I am excited about the recent appointment of Dr Giannis Efthymiou as AFSEE Assistant Professorial Research Fellow to work on innovative pedagogy. He will partner with colleagues across LSE to develop our understanding of global pedagogic practice. We plan to collaborate on developing practical resources for AFSEE and beyond, supporting inclusive and empowering educational practices.

I would like to thank Armine Ishkanian; under her committed, values-led, tireless leadership, AFSEE has become both more inward-facing, embedding itself ever more strongly at LSE, and more outward-looking, building connections across other fellowship programmes and communities.

Finally, I would like to thank LSE for its commitment to AFSEE over the past nine years and providing a fertile home for both its educational and research aspirations.

Dr Claire Gordon
Chair, AFSEE Governing Board



Claire Gordon, Chair of the AFSEE Governing Board

WHO WE ARE

The Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Programme, based at LSE International Inequalities Institute (III), is building a catalytic, values-led global community of people who are committed to using collective leadership to work towards social and economic justice for all. By drawing on the insights of academic research, innovative social change strategies, and the Fellows' experience and expertise, the AFSEE Programme empowers a new generation of changemakers, including policymakers, activists, researchers, practitioners and campaigners, to work together across disciplines, backgrounds and borders.

Established with a landmark gift from The Atlantic Philanthropies in 2016, over 20 years, the AFSEE Programme will support more than 400 Fellows from all over the world. Their active fellowship year centres on four key learning modules designed to support the Fellows' growth and development as leaders of social change. Residential Fellows undertake an MSc in Inequalities and Social Science at

LSE and participate in the AFSEE Modules, while Non-Residential Fellows remain in their home and professional environments and travel to attend the modules while carrying out project work. From the 2024/25 academic year onwards, Non-Residential Fellows will be awarded a Postgraduate Certificate in Social and Economic Equity upon successful completion of the active fellowship year.

AFSEE is one of seven Atlantic Fellow Programmes, which together create a global community to advance fairer, healthier and more inclusive societies. After finishing their active fellowship year, all Atlantic Fellows become part of a connected community of changemakers and receive ongoing support from the Atlantic Institute throughout their careers with opportunities to meet, learn from one another and connect with the global community. Based in Oxford at Rhodes Trust, the Atlantic Institute amplifies the impact of the Atlantic Fellows network and helps promote a lifelong community among Fellows. The Atlantic Philanthropies has invested over US\$600 million to support the work of this global network of thousands of Atlantic Fellows over the next two decades and beyond.

OUR VALUES

Fairness

Courage

Kindness

Curiosity

Commitment

IMPACT AND REACH

IMPACT STORIES

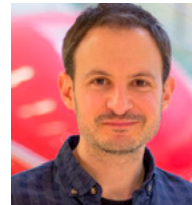
Leanne Sajor (2019-20 Cohort)

Leanne serves as the Director of the Funders for a Just Economy program at the Neighborhood Funders Group. She organises funders toward strategic alignment with the labour movement and the worker justice movement to advance economic justice and address racial capitalism in the United States. She states that as progressive funders, "We must reimagine our role—not just as grant-makers, but as strategic partners in reducing harm, fostering repair, and redistributing power for systemic transformation."



Joey Hasson (2017-18 Cohort)

Over the past two years, with support from the Atlantic Institute, Joey has been working with Tekano Fellow Tracey Malawana on a new project to tackle period poverty in South Africa, called I_Menstruate. I_Menstruate uses a movement-building approach, engaging young women and girls in South Africa's poorest schools to be advocates and agents of change in their schools and communities. After conducting research with 540 school youth in South Africa, they led a national training in June 2024, with 21 young women leaders and their teachers.



Máximo Jaramillo-Molina (2020-21 Cohort)

Máximo recently published a book with Penguin Press called *Pobres Porque Quieren: mitos de la desigualdad y la meritocracia* (*Poor Because They Want to Be: myths of inequality and meritocracy*). Promoting this book has been an incredibly enriching experience for him as it has allowed him to discuss the myths of inequality and meritocracy in many cities across Mexico. He believes the most beautiful part of these events has been witnessing people's expressions when they reach a key moment of reflection, "If you've been told that a supposed personal failure is entirely your fault... well, that's a lie."



Kruskaya Hidalgo Cordero (2021-22 Cohort)

Kruskaya has supported women working on digital platforms in forming a Latin American network of women trade unionists in the platform economy since last year. Kruskaya is focused on strengthening the coalition of digital platform workers, advancing the gender agenda designed by Latin American women workers to be included in the International Labour Organization (ILO) debates in Geneva, as well as working creatively to position these issues in the public agenda.



Kripa Basnyat (2018-19 Cohort)

Kripa is currently working in the joint programme Empowered Women Prosperous Nepal, an initiative focused on addressing gender inequalities in Nepal through gender transformative approaches. As part of women's economic empowerment, the Care Working Group, institutionalised under the leadership of the National Planning Commission (NPC), plays a key role in Nepal's development. A key takeaway from this work for her is that "care" is a multisectoral issue that demands a coordinated, multi-stakeholder approach and whole of society approach.



Oabona Sepora (2020-21 Cohort)

Oabona co-authored a chapter titled, "Life transforming intercultural pastoral care and counseling with transgender and intersex communities in Botswana", which was recently published in *The Palgrave Handbook of Violence in Africa*. The research conducted for the chapter reveals that there are few violence prevention programmes and initiatives from government, civil society, and non-governmental organisations aimed at alleviating pain and suffering among transgender and intersex communities in Botswana. It also offers recommendations on how to improve the situation.



AWARDS/ACHIEVEMENTS



Stephanie Akinwoya (2022-23 Cohort) was granted the Education Development Trust's Tim Morris Award to support her PhD research.



Hobeth Martínez Carrillo (2019-20 Cohort) was awarded the LSE Class Teacher Award in recognition of his contribution to teaching at the Department of Sociology at LSE.



Alon-Lee Green (2019-20 Cohort) was included in the TIME100 Next 2024 list as an emerging leader who is shaping the future and defining the next generation of leadership. He was also featured on the *Prospect Magazine's* Top Thinkers for 2024 - list under the category of "Freedom".



Kitti Baracsi (2020-21 Cohort) and her project, "Periferias dibujadas" ("Drawn peripheries") was selected for Amnesty International's Conversations with Reports - collaboration, in which, artists and activists are invited to respond to the "Under protected and over restricted: the state of the right to protest in 21 European countries" report.



Katy Rubin's (2023-24 Cohort) project, "The People Act" was shortlisted by the Sheila McKechnie Foundation for the National Campaigner Awards, in the Creative Changemakers category.

AFSEE FELLOWS



132
FELLOWS



58
COUNTRIES

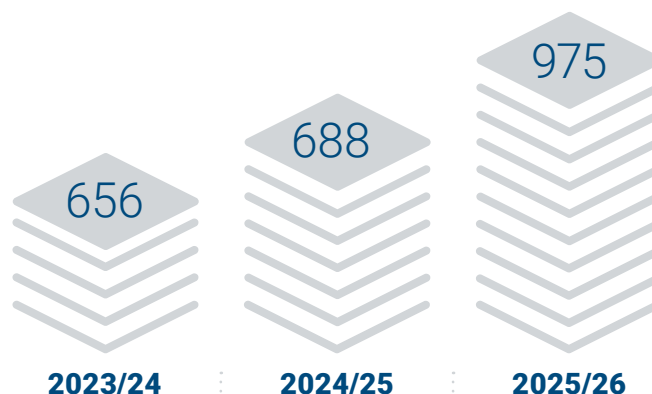


8
COHORTS

MOST POPULAR FIELDS OF EXPERTISE

1. Activism and movement building
2. Social and economic rights
3. Human rights
4. Public policy and governance
5. Climate justice and sustainability
6. Youth and education
7. Gender equity

AFSEE APPLICATIONS



OF ALL APPLICATIONS
RECEIVED IN 2025 WERE
FROM APPLICANTS BASED
IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH.

APPLICATIONS
RECEIVED FROM
114 COUNTRIES
FOR THE 2025/26
INTAKE.



MY FELLOWSHIP YEAR: A MIRACULOUS ESCAPE?

When I boarded a plane, heading to London and the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Programme, the weight of Gaza came with me. I had no idea that, within just a month, the familiar struggle, the resilience, and the life I had known would be engulfed in a new war. I'd left my family, friends, and home to pursue a fellowship on social and economic equity—a cause I had long cherished as an educator in Gaza. Now, in the wake of the war, my departure seemed nothing short of miraculous. Yet, as the days passed and the conflict deepened, I felt a whirlwind of gratitude, guilt, and a gnawing sense of displacement, writes Manar Alzrai (2023-24 Cohort).

NAVIGATING DISPLACEMENT AND PURPOSE

Initially, it felt like fate. For years, I had been deeply involved in advocating for equitable education and human rights in Gaza, but opportunities like the AFSEE Fellowship still felt almost unattainable. When the acceptance letter came, it represented more than just a professional opportunity; it felt like an invitation to amplify Gaza's voice on a global stage. Yet, in those first weeks, as the war unfolded, this dream began to feel strange, tinged with a sense of guilt. I had been granted a chance to escape, but why me when so many others had no such option? What made me the exception when the people I loved, colleagues, students, family—were still bound to the chaos of war?

These questions haunted me. Each call back home carried a mix of relief and sorrow. My loved ones would assure me that everything would be okay, that I was safe and "that's what mattered." But as I hung up each call, the detachment I felt was immense. Physically, I was thousands of miles away, sitting in classrooms where we discussed inequality issues and policies for economic and social equity. Mentally, I was in Gaza with the very

people I'd left behind, experiencing every bomb, every loss, and every disruption as though I were still there. It's a paradox I continue to carry: the privilege of leaving with the burden of watching from afar.

As time passed, I began to question the nature of this experience. Surely, it must have been a blessing, given that I was safe and able to channel my energy into the fellowship and my studies. But there were moments when it felt like a curse.

My own privilege—of safety, of choice—became a barrier that set me apart from the daily struggles of those back home. The feeling of helplessness ate away at me. No matter what help I managed to provide, it never felt like enough. I couldn't stop the bombs from killing my loved ones.

TRANSFORMING PAIN INTO ADVOCACY

However, the fellowship became a turning point. I realised that by being at The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and by being part of the global AFSEE Community, I had a responsibility to represent Gaza's voice, experiences, and aspirations. Every discussion on inequality, every policy review, and every presentation became an opportunity to channel the urgency of Gaza's plight into a broader framework. I spoke of Gaza in ways I never had before, not simply as a place of conflict but as a space of resilience, dignity, and unyielding strength.



Manar Alzrai

One of the most transformative moments during my fellowship was realising how Gaza's story resonates far beyond its borders. In a policy discussion on inequality, I spoke about the impact of settler colonialism and systemic injustices on education in Gaza—how classrooms struggle to function under the weight of conflict, deprivation, and erasure. The room fell silent, not out of pity but out of recognition. Peers from different parts of the world began drawing connections to their own struggles—be it educational inequities in rural India or systemic racism in the US. This shared understanding reinforced a powerful truth: Gaza's resilience is not just a local story but a universal symbol of dignity and determination. Through these discussions, I discovered the power of advocacy and the critical importance of making Gaza's voice a central part of global dialogues on justice.

BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH KNOWLEDGE AND SOLIDARITY

The MSc in Inequalities and Social Science programme and the AFSEE Fellowship offered invaluable support for my mission. Academic modules on social inequality and policy analysis deepened my understanding of systemic injustices and helped frame Palestine's struggles within a global context. AFSEE workshops provided leadership and advocacy tools that I applied to my work. The guidance from programme directors, combined with the solidarity of Fellows from around the world, created a network of shared purpose and mutual learning. Conversations with peers revealed common threads across struggles, reaffirming Palestine's place in the global fight for equity and justice.

The wider LSE community enriched this journey further. Faculty members encouraged critical thinking, pushing me to explore new dimensions of inequality, while the extensive resources available at LSE allowed me to deepen my understanding of the historical and

structural forces shaping Palestine's struggles. Informal exchanges with students broadened my perspectives and offered a space for dialogue and collaboration. Together, these experiences transformed my fellowship into an act of advocacy, where every essay and presentation became a declaration that Palestine is not only a site of despair but also a symbol of hope, resilience, and potential for change.

As my active fellowship year concluded, I came to realise that my departure was neither a blessing nor a curse; it was, simply put, a circumstance. This journey has been a chapter in my story, one that joins countless others from Gaza who continue to hope, resist, and build a future amid uncertainty. In the end, I carry Gaza with me—not as a miracle or a burden but as the essence of who I am and why I do what I do. As I walk this path, I am reminded that while I may be miles away, my heart remains in Gaza, and my purpose—to advocate for equity, justice, and dignity—continues to beat in rhythm with those who are still there.



The guidance from programme directors, combined with the solidarity of Fellows from around the world, created a network of shared purpose and mutual learning.”

AFSEE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

EDUCATIONAL VISION AND PEDAGOGY

The educational vision of the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Programme is guided by a commitment to research-rich learning, experience-reflection dialogue, and fostering connections among changemakers through professional practice at regional and global levels. This vision, inspired by the work of the Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire, assigns primacy to dialogue as its pedagogic centre. Dialogues between theory and practice, action and reflection, and academics and practitioners serve as an effective paradigm for strengthening the work for social change. AFSEE draws on Fellows' expertise and experience in activism, policy, and government to create global solidarity, collective knowledge, and influence how inequality and equity are understood in academic and professional fields.

AFSEE's educational vision is implemented through a carefully crafted pedagogy and learning curve that include intensive academic modules, skills training sessions, community-building activities and inter-modular webinars. The academic modules create spaces for Fellows to familiarise and critically engage with the enduring and emerging debates in theory and method for examining inequalities as well as reflect on their own practice for creating a more socially and economically equitable world. The four academic modules of the programme reflect these priorities. Module 1 (in-person), **Foundations of Social and Economic Inequalities**, focuses on the histories and legacies of inequalities and the various models for measuring inequalities. Module 2 (online), **Policy for Equity**, explores



Sasha Jattansingh (2024-25 Cohort) and Dr Annalena Oppel (AFSEE Research Fellow) at Module 4 in July 2025.

Photo Credit: Catarina Heeckt

how policy can be both a tool for maintaining the status quo and a means of creating equity across all areas of social and economic inequalities. Module 3 (in-person), **Challenging and Transforming Inequality**, examines the role of grassroots initiatives, NGOs, civil society organisations, and social movements in challenging and changing structures of inequalities. Module 4 (in-person), focuses on a specific theme that draws on current global events. The theme changes annually. In 2025, reflecting on the rise of authoritarian regimes and democratic backsliding in several countries, this module engages with the theme Crisis of Democracy.

UPDATING THE CURRICULUM TO ENGAGE WITH THE CHANGING AND EMERGING NEW INEQUALITIES

As in the previous years, this year saw the continuation of the existing three main modules, with a few new additions to throw light on the changing and emerging discourses around inequality. Module 1 saw three changes: 1) Dr Gabriela Cabana-Alvear led a session on

anti-colonial de-growth focusing on the resistance struggles and environmental movements in the Global South; 2) Dr Sarah Kerr and Dr Michael Vaughan led a joint session that examined the role of “framing and narratives” in understanding wealth inequalities; and 3) Ruby Hembrom, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2021-22 Cohort), delivered a lecture on feminist economics from the perspective of Adivasi women in India. Crystal Simeoni (2019-20 Cohort), Liz Nelson (2019-20 Cohort), and Carlos Brown Solà (2022-23 Cohort) spoke at the Senior Fellow Roundtable in Module 1.

Module 2 included a new session led by Senior Fellows Renata Ćuk (2018-19 Cohort) and Rose Longhurst (2017-18 Cohort) on, “Funding for social change” drawing on their extensive experience in the world of philanthropy. We were also delighted to welcome back Sebastián Ignacio Muñoz Pérez (2022-23 Cohort), and Caroline Kioko (2021-22 Cohort) who presented their work during the Senior Fellows' Roundtable during Module 2.

Several changes were made to Module 3: 1) Mark Heywood delivered a lecture on rethinking activism; 2) Dr



Senior Fellows' roundtable, George, Barbara van Paassen (2020-21 Cohort) and Salman Usmani (2022-23 Cohort) with Naledi Maite (2022-23 Cohort) on the screen

Irene Guijt led a session on hope and civil society; 3) Dr Duncan Green and Dr Tom Kirk gave a joint lecture on influencing strategies for achieving the desired impact; and 4) for the first time, we hosted a two-day case study field trip to Scotland (see details on the case study trip below).

MODULE 4: CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY

The thematic module for this year, **Crisis of Democracy**, was chosen based on the majority vote by the Current Fellows (2024-25 Cohort) with the objective of reflecting on the shrinking democratic space in several countries across the globe. This module explored the current crisis of democracy, manifested in the rise of authoritarian regimes, populist leadership, declining trust in democratic institutions, increasing inequalities and heightened levels of misinformation and hate speech. This module provided space for collective reflection on the future of democracy. The speakers on this module included Professor Jonathan Hopkin who presented theoretical reflections on the crisis of democracy, a session on narratives led by Raquel Jesse and Dr Faiza Shaheen, a presentation by AFSEE Senior Fellow

Pedro Telles (2018-19 Cohort) on his work on the challenges facing democracy globally, and an interactive session on the use of arts and crafts, specifically embroidery, as a form of political resistance and dissent that was co-led by Dr Tanya Harmer and Gloria Miqueles. This module also included a Senior Fellow Roundtable led by Barbara van Paassen (2020-21 Cohort), Salman Usmani (2022-23 Cohort), and Naledi Maite (2022-23 Cohort).

SENIOR FELLOWS' GREATER PARTICIPATION IN THE DELIVERY AND CO-CURATION OF MODULES

This year involved greater participation of Senior Fellows in the module delivery. In addition to the usual Senior Fellow Roundtables that are held in each module, this year we welcomed back many Senior Fellows to give presentations on their work: Ruby Hembrom (2021-22 Cohort), Renata Ćuk (2018-19 Cohort), Rose Longhurst (2017-18 Cohort), and Pedro Telles (2018-19 Cohort).

This year, for the first time, we had a case study field trip to Scotland as part of an AFSEE module. The module was co-curated by three

AFSEE Fellows based in Scotland, namely Jen Ang (2024-25 Cohort), Clare MacGillivray (2021-22 Cohort) and Jack Nissan (2017-18 Cohort). This case study field trip focused on: 1) Scotland's complex relationship with histories of imperialism, colonialism, and slavery; 2) local, regional, national, and global narratives about Scotland, and the narratives prevalent in Scotland about Scottish identity; 3) examples of activism on the ground such as human rights defenders working in the Scottish context on housing and migrant rights; and 4) a session led by Jack Nissan which included the Tinderbox Collective and members of the Samata Collective that focused on the role of music and art in advancing equity.

POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMME (PG CERT)

The current academic year (2024/25) witnessed the enrolment of the Non-Residential Fellows on the Postgraduate Certificate Programme at LSE for the first time. This marked the approval of the application by the AFSEE Programme in May 2023 to accredit the Non-Residential stream by the LSE's Executive MSc committee. Non-Residential Fellows who complete all the required elements of the AFSEE Programme and pass their Independent Project will be awarded the Postgraduate Certificate in Social and Economic Equity (PG Cert SEE) with the value of two transferrable units. A postgraduate certificate is an internationally recognised academic certificate regulated by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. The Postgraduate Certificate will offer academic recognition for the Non-Residential Fellows' work and learnings on the programme.

LIFELONG FELLOWSHIP

THE AFSEE SENIOR FELLOWS COMMUNITY

The Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Programme is a lifelong fellowship, which means that being an AFSEE Fellow does not end when the initial fellowship year ends. A key strategic objective for AFSEE is to create lifelong engagement opportunities and offerings to amplify the impact of the fellowship over time, thereby allowing Fellows to continue to shape, grow, and scale up their social change work. These opportunities and offerings become increasingly more important as our Senior Fellows community grows. We now have over 100 Senior Fellows from across seven cohorts and over 50 countries.

Fellows from the 2023-24 Cohort joined the Senior Fellows community this academic year. As part of their onboarding to Senior Fellowship, the AFSEE team hosted two bespoke workshops focusing on transitions, one per each of the respective tracks, and a series of one-to-one conversations. We also worked with the Atlantic Institute to provide a series of online induction sessions for the graduating Fellows to enhance their integration into the wider Atlantic Fellows community.

One of the biggest challenges for our lifelong engagement strategy continues to be finding ways to bring together such a global community of Fellows. The need to reduce our carbon footprint has made it even more vitally important for us to find ways to connect virtually in order to facilitate an ever-growing and deepening community connection. The AFSEE Town Halls, held online twice per year, are a key vehicle for bolstering cross-cohort community



AFSEE Senior Fellows Enamul Mazid Khan Siddique (2022-23 Cohort), Myriam Hernández Vazquez (2021-22 Cohort), Rosario Fassina (2022-23 Cohort), and AFSEE Executive Director Armine Ishkanian smiling in front of Myriam's "GAWI" display at the LSE Festival exhibition launch reception in June 2025.

building amongst the Fellows. This academic year, we slightly tweaked the structure of the Town Halls; in addition to sharing key updates from the AFSEE Programme, we now dedicate a large portion of the Town Hall for an open discussion on a topic relevant to Fellows. For the Town Hall held in June 2025, we, for example, invited reflections on responding, reacting, and reimagining in light of shifts in funding and philanthropy spaces.

As we are aware that each cohort has its unique bonds based on shared experiences and memories, we also continue to create spaces for individual cohorts to come together and build on those bonds through the AFSEE Cohort Reunions. This academic year, the six separate virtual cohort reunion events were held in April 2025 and brought together 35 per cent of all our Senior Fellows.

ENHANCING COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FELLOWS TO DISSEMINATE THEIR WORK

During the 2024/25 academic year, many of the offerings and opportunities for Senior Fellows have focused on improving the dissemination of Fellows' work, either by enhancing Fellows' communication skills or by creating bespoke opportunities for Fellows to share their knowledge and experiences.

- In November 2024, AFSEE co-hosted a Professional Skills Development webinar on, "How to write a policy memo" with colleagues, Raquel Jesse and Symphony Chu, from our partners at the Center on International Cooperation (CIC). Later we then launched a call for Senior Fellows to submit policy memo abstracts for the Inequality Solutions

portal²³, which is a one-stop public resource of applied well-researched policies focusing on reducing inequality.

- In February 2025, we announced the call for the second round of submissions for the AcPrac Case Studies and Reflection Pieces initiative, which is a part of the “Exploring the potential of academic-practitioner collaborations for social change”²⁴ project. For this call, we invited Fellows to share their experiences and reflections on academic-practitioner collaborations in an academic format or through a creative format of their choice. We commissioned 12 Fellows in this second round.
- In May 2025, AFSEE co-hosted a three-day writing retreat in Cape Town with the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance as part of our joint “Rethinking activism in Africa: enhancing civic leadership in a time of uncertainty and transition” project. The retreat, which was co-curated with partners from the University of Cape Town (UCT) (Mark Heywood and Penny Parenzee) brought together seven AFSEE Fellows and seven Fellows from the wider Atlantic Fellows community to discuss their contributions to the book of essays expected to be published in late 2025.
- In July 2025, we hosted the inaugural AFSEE Residential Creative Communications

programme at the Hawkwood Centre for Future Thinking in Stroud, England. The objective of the specially curated weeklong residential was to offer Senior Fellows an opportunity to learn more about creative communications and storytelling.

STRENGTHENING KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE FOR AFSEE SENIOR FELLOWS

At AFSEE, knowledge exchange is a dynamic and fluid process, which incorporates distinct forms of knowledge from multiple sources, especially those which are not always seen as bearers of knowledge. To amplify Senior Fellows’ knowledge exchange, in March 2025, we launched two Knowledge Exchange Funds which have been added to AFSEE’s extensive funding support streams for Senior Fellows which already offer support for accessing technical equipment, connectivity, hardship, professional development, and participation.

The AFSEE Knowledge Exchange Fund for Community Engagement is designed to encourage Senior Fellows to develop and implement activities that directly engage local communities and promote innovative, collaborative, non-extractive, and mutually beneficial interactions that translate AFSEE values into action and co-create solutions for a more equitable and just society.

The AFSEE Knowledge Exchange Fund for Wider Impact is designed to support the dissemination of

Senior Fellows’ research and expertise with wider audiences. This could include sharing academic knowledge with non-academic audiences but also sharing practitioner-based knowledge and expertise with people who don’t usually have access to it.

As part of our knowledge exchange activities, we collaborated with AFSEE Senior Fellow Myriam Hernández Vazquez (2021-22 Cohort) to showcase her research at the LSE Festival 2025 Visions for the Future²⁵ exhibition. The display showcased information about GAWI²⁶, an award-winning virtual reality dream experience co-created by Myriam and the Rarámuri, an indigenous community of northern Mexico, celebrating the community’s indigenous ecological wisdom on taking care of Mother Earth. As part of the exhibition display, visitors were able to experience GAWI through virtual reality (VR) headsets. During the LSE Festival week, AFSEE also organised an interactive workshop led by Myriam for LSE students and members of the AFSEE community on using immersive storytelling for social and climate justice. Katy Rubin (2023-24 Cohort) also led an interactive introduction to Legislative Theatre with Samra Said during the LSE Festival. The workshop was followed by a panel discussion with Dr Miqdad Asaria and Dr Shabna Begum.

23 Pathfinders, *Practical Policies for Change*. Published on SDG16.PLUS.

24 AFSEE, *Exploring the Potential of Academic-Practitioner Collaborations for Social Change*. Published on AFSEE.ATLANTICFELLOWS.LSE.AC.UK.

25 LSE, *Visions for the Future: LSE Festival Exhibition*. Published on LSE.AC.UK.

26 GAWI, *GAWI: Un sueño ancestral Rarámuri sobre el cuidado de la Madre Tierra*. Published on GAWI.MX.COM

EVENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

PUBLIC LECTURES

Depletion: the human costs of caring

Co-hosted by the Department of Gender Studies
Wednesday 2 October 2024. In-person and online public event.

This event launched Professor Shirin Rai's book *Depletion*, which explores the human costs of caring and shows how depletion is both a contributing factor and an outcome of economic, environmental, health and social crises.

Speakers: Professor Juanita Elias, Professor of International Political Economy, University of Warwick; Professor Diane Elson, Emeritus Professor, University of Essex; Dr Ania Plomien, Associate Professor in Gender and Social Science, LSE; Professor Shirin M Rai, Distinguished Research Professor, SOAS; Dr Christopher Choong Weng Wai, AFSEE Fellow (2020-21 Cohort)

Chair: Professor Sumi Madhok, Professor of Political Theory and Gender Studies, LSE

Power to the people

Co-hosted by the LSE International Inequalities Institute (III)
Monday 27 January 2025. In-person and online public event.

In this event, Danny Sriskandarajah discussed his new book *Power to the People*. Drawing on his extensive experience in leading civil society organisations around the globe, he sets out his radical blueprint for change.

Speaker: Danny Sriskandarajah, Chief Executive, New Economics Foundation and Visiting Senior Fellow, LSE III

Discussants: Lysa John, Executive Director, Atlantic Institute; Jo Swinson, Director of Partners for a New Economy (P4NE) and Visiting Professor, Cranfield University

Chair: Professor Armine Ishkanian, AFSEE Executive Director and Professor of Social Policy, LSE

Democracy and the right to protest in the UK

Co-hosted by the LSE International Inequalities Institute (III)

Monday 24 March 2025. In-person and online public event.

This panel discussed why protests matter, what the shrinking of democratic space means for social movements and activists, and what can be done to protect freedom of speech and the right to protest.

Speakers: Pascale Frazer-Carroll, AFSEE Fellow (2023-24 Cohort); Dr Richard Martin, Assistant Professor of Law, LSE; Sam Nadel, PhD Candidate in Social Policy, LSE and Director of the Social Change Lab

Chair: Dr George Kunnath, Associate Professor (Education) and Academic Lead, AFSEE



Left to right: Lysa John, Jo Swinson, Danny Sriskandarajah, and Armine Ishkanian

Photo Credit: Maria Moore

Building community in polarised times

Co-hosted by Facing History & Ourselves UK and the LSE Faith Centre

Thursday 22 May 2025. In-person public event.

The panel discussion looked at examples of how we can create space for healthy dialogue, build empathy, and foster a greater sense of shared humanity both within communities and across them.

Speakers: Professor James Walters, Director, LSE Faith Centre and Professor in Practice, Department of International Relations, LSE; Mari Williams, Deputy Headteacher and Facing History Teacher Leader; Joey Hasson, AFSEE Fellow (2017-18 Cohort)

Chair: Dr Maël Lavenaire, Research Fellow in Racial Inequality, AFSEE/LSE III

LSE Festival: Watch, act, vote: legislative theatre for health and climate justice

Co-hosted by the LSE Global Health Initiative and Department of Health Policy

Thursday 19 June 2025. In-person public event.

This event offered an interactive introduction to the Legislative Theatre methodology, for practitioners, activists, and policymakers, and anyone seeking new ways to inject accessibility, creativity and joyfulness into decision-making and systems change.

Speakers: Katy Rubin, AFSEE Fellow (2023-24 Cohort); Samra Said, Co-Director, Arts & Homelessness International; Dr Shabna Begum, CEO, the Runnymede Trust

Chair: Dr Miqdad Asaria, Assistant Professor, Department of Health Policy, LSE



Photo Credit: Matteo Menapace

Katy Rubin (2023-24 Cohort), Dr Miqdad Asaria, Dr Shabna Begum, and Samra Said at an LSE Festival event

Poor because they want to be: myths of inequality and meritocracy

Thursday 3 July 2025. In-person and online public event.

In this event, Máximo discussed his new book *Pobres Porque Quieren: mitos de la desigualdad y la meritocracia* (*Poor Because They Want To Be: myths of inequality and meritocracy*).

Speakers: Dr Máximo E Jaramillo-Molina, AFSEE Fellow (2020-21 Cohort) and Associate Professor, the Centre for Social Sciences and Humanities (CUCSH), University of Guadalajara; Professor Jenny Pearce, Visiting Professor, LSE III

Chair: Professor Armine Ishkanian, AFSEE Executive Director and Professor of Social Policy, LSE

SPONSORED EVENTS

Oxfam Water Security Workshop

Convening key stakeholders with a shared focus on achieving water security, the conference sought to find strategic alignment that will lead to a collaborative and sustainable approach for new programming and funding. The one-day event held in October 2024 facilitated discussion to explore challenges, opportunities and identify strategic alignments for ambitious collective action. Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Senior Fellow Najma Mohamed (2023-24 Cohort) participated in the workshop.

Politics of Inequality Conference

The AFSEE/LSE International Inequalities Institute (III) research programme, Politics of Inequality, ended in December 2024. To mark the end of this research programme, a two-day international conference that included presentations by both academics and AFSEE Fellows was held. This conference was a good example of how AFSEE creates opportunities for Fellows to engage with academics and policymakers from across LSE and beyond. In addition to paper presentations, the conference included a live podcast session led by Senior Fellow Barbara van Paassen

(2020-21 Cohort) and a multi-media exhibition of photographs and videos from presenters. The conference was attended by LSE staff, students, Fellows, and members of the AFSEE and Atlantic Institute Governing Boards. A selection of the conference papers will be published in an edited volume. The Politics of Inequality research programme will continue as a research network with members of the network developing new collaborations.

LSE Africa Summit 2025

Gathering renowned scholars, leading politicians, changemakers, activists and forward-thinking entrepreneurs, the LSE Africa Summit is an annual student-led conference that showcases Africa's expertise and global contribution, promoting debate around the continent's contemporary challenges and opportunities.

The LSE Africa Summit 2025 was themed, "Securing Africa's future: promoting resilience in a divided world", and it sought to highlight Africa's potential to drive innovative solutions and foster resilience amidst complexities such as a rapidly changing global order marked by shifting trade dynamics, climate challenges, and economic dependencies. The 2025 Summit featured AFSEE Fellows Josephine Chiname (2023-24 Cohort), Maureen Sigauke (2018-19 Cohort), and Aisha Abdulaziz (2021-22 Cohort) who participated in panel discussions.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Digital Communications as of July 2025



375,246

WEBSITE
VIEWS

The most popular pages this academic year have been the "Applications open for the 2025-26 Cohort" news story (22 per cent of all views); the apply page (8.8 per cent of all views); and the homepage (6.6 per cent of all views). The total number of website views increased by 33.65 per cent this year compared to last academic year.



7,899

NEWSLETTER
SUBSCRIBERS

AFSEE sends out regular newsletters to its prospective applicants' mailing list, providing further information about the AFSEE Programme and its application process. A further 1,834 people have signed up to the mailing list this academic year, which means that the overall subscriber amount has increased by 30.2 per cent in a year. The list currently has an average open rate of 56.6 per cent and a 7.3 per cent click rate (compared to the industry average of 37 per cent and 5.5 per cent respectively).

RESEARCH AND PROJECTS

Atlantic Equity Challenge

The Atlantic Equity Challenge (AEQ) aims to support projects at the intersection of research and practice that offer paradigm-shifting insights into alternatives and solutions that reduce inequality – rather than focusing solely on the causes and consequences of inequality. These collaborations will draw on multiple forms of knowledge and experience, from across disciplines and sectors. They will incubate new models, policies and approaches that have the potential to disrupt the systems and structures driving inequality.

Through the AEQ, Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) seeks to promote research collaborations between LSE academics and AFSEE Senior Fellows, as well as other partners where relevant. The research grant is envisioned as more than a funding opportunity: it is the beginning of a long-term partnership between the project teams, the AFSEE Programme, and the LSE International Inequalities Institute (III).

“The Atlantic Equity Challenge (AEQ) feeds into AFSEE’s aim of bringing together research, education, and practice, and creating dialogue among a range of different stakeholders, including academics, activists, practitioners, and policymakers. We hope that the AEQ will foster research collaborations between LSE researchers, AFSEE Senior Fellows, and other practitioners which will lead to new models, policies, and approaches that have the potential to disrupt the systems and structures driving inequality.”

Professor Armine Ishkanian, Executive Director of the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity

In its second round, the AEQ funded five projects, which are being implemented during 2024, 2025 and 2026. These include:

HIGHER EDUCATION IN LATIN AMERICA: BOOSTING UPWARD MOBILITY OR REPRODUCING INEQUALITY?

This research aims to evaluate whether Latin American higher education systems exacerbate or alleviate socioeconomic inequalities and examine the mechanisms perpetuating disparities or facilitating upward mobility. The primary aim of the project is to empirically examine whether Chile’s and Mexico’s higher education systems intensify or lessen socioeconomic inequalities.

RESEARCH TEAM:

Dr Louis Sirugue, Research Officer, LSE III; **Dr Valentina Contreras**, Visiting Fellow, LSE III; **Andrea Encalada García**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2020-21 Cohort) and Chief Advisor for the Ministry of Education, Government of Chile; **Malik Fercovic Cerda**, PhD Candidate, Department of Sociology, LSE and Senior Consultant, Triple Impacto; **Dr Máximo Ernesto Jaramillo-Molina**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2020-21 Cohort) and Associate Professor, University of Guadalajara (CUCSH).

CONNECTING DISABILITY JUSTICE WITH WIDER CHALLENGES TO INEQUALITIES

Working from a Global South perspective, the project develops a practical toolkit for the intersectional inclusion of disability in inequality campaigns and vice versa. It contributes to developing networks between disability and other inequality campaigners, and to building expertise on disability and complex inequalities more widely among inequality and disability campaigners.

RESEARCH TEAM:

Betty Mulavi, Research Consultant, ADD International; **Edward Adiibokah**, Research Fellow, Kintampo Health Research Centre; **Fredrick Ouko Alucheli**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2017-18 Cohort) and Co-Chief Executive, ADD International; **Hamidreza Vasheganifarahani**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2022-23 Cohort) and Occasional Research Officer, LSE III; **Lionel Sakyi**, Public Health Researcher; **Dr Liz Sayce**, Visiting Professor in Practice, LSE III; **Lyla Adwan-Kamara**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2023-24 Cohort) and Disability and Mental Health Specialist; **Perpetual Kariuki**, Research Assistant, ADD International; **Dr Phillipa Mullins**, Visiting Fellow, LSE III

SHIFTING THE DIAL ON STRUCTURAL RACISM AGAINST GYPSY TRAVELLERS IN SCOTLAND

This AEQ project is a direct response to Gypsy Travellers' concerns about their experiences of inequality and the impact of racism and discrimination in Scotland and has been co-created by community members. The co-led research will use storytelling as a research methodology and will co-produce a series of podcasts, blog posts and academic papers.

RESEARCH TEAM:

Professor Coretta Phillips, Professor of Criminology and Social Policy, LSE; **Clare MacGillivray**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2022-23 Cohort) and Director, Making Rights Real; **Caroline Kioko**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2022-23 Cohort) and Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Manager, Porticus Global; **Dr Carolyn Scott**, Lecturer in Journalism, Edinburgh Napier University.

RIGAN - RESISTING INEQUALITIES THROUGH A GLOBAL ARTS NETWORK: ONLINE AND OFFLINE BARRIERS TO AND FACILITATORS OF CONNECTION AND IMPACT

This project will study the development of an international network of arts and community organisations which use the arts to challenge hierarchies and structures of inequalities in their local contexts. The project will develop a series of participatory arts productions and collaborations, accessible online and hybrid platforms for remote collaboration, live performance events within communities, and in-person exchanges.

RESEARCH TEAM:

Professor Ellen Helsper, Professor of Digital Inequalities, Department of Media and Communications, LSE; **Professor Bart Cammaerts**, Professor of Politics and Communication, Department of Media and Communications, LSE; **Jack Nissan**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2017-18 Cohort) and Founding Director, Tinderbox Collective; **Roseline Orwa**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2018-19 Cohort) and Founder and CEO, Rona Foundation; **Vijay Kumar**, Founding Director, Jagriti; **Meera Jatav**, Founding Director, Chitrakoot Collective; **Mike Wamaya**, Founding Director, Project Elimu.

IMPROVING INEQUALITY STATISTICS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

This project aims to provide a consistent framework for interpreting and navigating through the existing inequality estimates in Latin America and the Caribbean. Through a rigorous examination of original data sources, it will generate measures of income concentration specifically derived from income tax data for the countries in the region. These series will subsequently be triangulated with other data sources.

RESEARCH TEAM:

Professor Facundo Alvaredo, Professorial Research Fellow, LSE III; **Rosario Fassina**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2022-23 Cohort) and Right to Housing Researcher and Activist; **Daniel Salazar Murillo**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2021-22 Cohort) and Data Insight Analyst, Atlantic Institute; **Dr Ignacio Flores Beale**, Latin American Coordinator, World Inequality Lab and Researcher for the GC Wealth Project, City University of New York; **Mr Daniel Sánchez Ordóñez**, PhD Candidate, Paris School of Economics; **Martín Moyano**, PhD Candidate in Social Science, Universidad de Buenos Aires.



The Academic-Practitioner Collaborations (AcPrac)

Photo Credit: Yordan Papikyan via Unsplash



Launched in December 2021, the Academic-Practitioner Collaborations (AcPrac) project explores how collaborations between academics and practitioners can contribute to social change, with a particular focus on tackling inequalities. The project has two aims: 1) to develop a better understanding of academic-practitioner (AcPrac) collaborations and how these are shaped by knowledge inequalities; and 2) to use this knowledge to help to inform the work of past, current and future cohorts of Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Fellows on how to create and sustain research practice collaborations that can contribute to tackling inequalities through policy change and wider social transformation. The AcPrac project includes a sub-project led by Dr Aygen Kurt-Dickson on funding policy and funders in academic-practitioner collaborations.

PROJECT TEAM:

Professor Armine Ishkanian, Executive Director, AFSEE; **Barbara van Paassen**, AFSEE Senior Fellow (2020-21 Cohort); **Dr Tahnee Ooms**, Visiting Fellow, LSE III; **Dr Aygen Kurt-Dickson**, Policy Fellow, AFSEE; **Ishita Puri**, Research Assistant, AFSEE; **Yasmine Kherfi**, AcPrac Editor, AFSEE, PhD Candidate, Department of Sociology, LSE; **Dr Branwen Spector**, Research Assistant, AFSEE and Lecturer in Social Anthropology, University College London.

Over the past three years, the project has grown to include a wide range of outputs, including two academic journal articles, 13 reflection pieces and case studies written by AFSEE Fellows, as well as a multilingual good practice guide. Recent publications include:

- “Academic practitioner collaborations can tackle persistent knowledge inequalities, but they need recognition” (A Ishkanian – *Impact of Social Sciences* blog, 2025)
- “Hierarchies of knowers and knowledges: exploring the potential of academic practitioner collaborations in tackling knowledge inequalities” (A Ishkanian, T C Ooms, B J van Paassen, A Kurt-Dickson, I Puri, B Spector - *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 2025)
- “The role of academia practice partnerships in the well-being economy: retracing synergies between health and social sciences using bibliometric analysis” (T Ooms, K Klaser, A Ishkanian - *Health Policy*, 2023)

These resources are freely accessible on the AcPrac project website and continue to inform AFSEE’s pedagogy and theory of change.

In 2024, the second round of AcPrac case studies was launched, open to AFSEE Fellows from the 2017-18 Cohort to the 2024-25 Cohort who had not participated in the first round. Thirteen abstracts were selected, and the chosen contributors participated in a writing workshop led by Yasmine Kherfi, editor of the first AcPrac series. The second round again highlights the diversity of experiences and perspectives within the AFSEE community and further contributes to the programme’s commitment to bridging academic knowledge with practical action.

The following abstracts were selected:

- “Future urgency” (Gabiella Razzano, AFSEE Senior Fellow, 2018–19 Cohort)
- “Deliberative mini publics: a tool for collective reflection on a more just and human rights-based approach to social rights” (Danilo Ćurčić, AFSEE Senior Fellow, 2020-21 Cohort)
- “Cromañón: from mourning to politicization. Intersections between academia and mobilizers in a case that made history in Buenos Aires” (Mauro Fernández, AFSEE Senior Fellow, 2020-21 Cohort)

- “Exploring academia-practitioner collaboration as a space for non-conformism as a space of transcendence” (Aisha Abdulaziz, AFSEE Senior Fellow, 2021-22 Cohort)
- “Navigating power, privilege, and feminist solidarity in the platform economy: bridging academia, unionism, and worker-led resistance” (Kruskaya Hidalgo, AFSEE Senior Fellow, 2021-22 Cohort; Angélica Salgado)
- “Publishing as resistance: the politics of independent publishing, language justice, and knowledge production in India” (Madhuresh Kumar, AFSEE Senior Fellow, 2021-22 Cohort; Sanjay Josh)
- “Objects and objectification: encounters with Adivasi material culture” (Ruby Hembrom, AFSEE Senior Fellow, 2021-22 Cohort)
- “Challenges of collaboration. The role of academia facilitating Municipal Urban Regeneration efforts, the case of Laboratorio 9x18” (Sebastián Ignacio Muñoz Pérez, AFSEE Senior Fellow, 2022-23 Cohort)
- “Bridging research and practice: reflections on power, collaboration and learning in implementation of a district mental healthcare plan in Ghana” (Lyla Adwan-Kamara, AFSEE Senior Fellow, 2023-24 Cohort; Lionel Sakyi)
- “Academic-practitioner collaborations to improve citizen security in Central America” (Dany Díaz Mejía, AFSEE Fellow, 2024-25 Cohort)
- “Working at the nexus of academia & practice: reflections on navigating academic-practitioner collaborations under authoritarianism in El Salvador” (Fátima Pacas, AFSEE Fellow, 2024-25 Cohort)
- “Expectations and limitations of journalism as a nexus of academia and practice: experiences of female journalists bridging feminist intellectual circles and Gen Z activists in Korea” (JiHye Jeong, AFSEE Fellow, 2024-25 Cohort)

ACPRAC SUB-PROJECT: FUNDING POLICY AND FUNDERS (FPF) IN ACADEMIC-PRACTITIONER COLLABORATIONS

PROJECT TEAM:

Dr Aygen Kurt-Dickson, Policy Fellow, AFSEE; **Ishita Puri**, Research Assistant, AFSEE.

This study was launched in early 2023 as a sub-project of the Academic-Practitioner Collaborations (AcPrac) project. Its main aim is to investigate the funding landscape that drives academic-practitioner collaborations for social change, with a focus on funding collaborative research projects on inequalities. The key objectives are to understand: 1) “who” is funding collaborative projects on inequalities; 2) the rationale and the policies funders build their investments on; 3) the types of projects and actors funded in these schemes; 4) funders’ main motivations, views and assumptions in funding AcPrac; and 5) awarded projects’ experiences in receiving such funds.

PUBLICATIONS:

- Background Review Report: “Funding policy and funders’ role in driving academic-practitioner collaborations” (A Kurt-Dickson and I Puri – *LSE Research Online*, 2025).
- Bridging research and practice: “Funders as drivers for social equity” (A Kurt-Dickson – *LSE Inequalities* blog, 2025).
- A summary report of the Funding Policy and Funders (FPF) project’s workshop (A Kurt-Dickson – *LSE Research Online*, 2025).



Incubation Labs

The AFSEE Incubation Labs is a pilot initiative developed by the AFSEE Programme as part of its lifelong engagement strategy. Launched at the AFSEE Leadership Summit in January 2023, the Incubation Labs encourage cross-cohort connections between Senior Fellows around shared areas of interest and work and foster collaborative projects that are designed, led, and implemented by AFSEE Senior Fellows.

Through this initiative, Senior Fellows have opportunities to practise collective leadership and take action on pressing societal challenges; build cross-cohort networks; and strengthen their expertise and collective capacity through peer-to-peer learning and exchange.

In the first round of Incubation Labs, nine projects were developed and implemented by Fellows:

GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH VIRTUAL REALITY



This Lab explored the potential of immersive digital technologies in addressing gender-based violence (GBV) and fostering gender-equitable behaviours among young people in Trinidad and Tobago. Through interactive workshops, virtual reality (VR) experiences, and cultural exhibitions, the Lab engaged participants in discussions on gender norms and advocacy, integrating storytelling with cutting-edge technology.

The project's main activities and outputs included: workshops with young people aged 18 to 25, incorporating VR technology with open discussions on GBV, immersive storytelling, and 360-degree filmmaking; working with local organisations to develop and facilitate training; hosting a two-day exhibition of the GAWI VR experience; conducting online training-the-trainers sessions; and organising debrief discussions with workshop participants to assess impact and gather insights for future engagement.

FELLOWS:

Kevin Liverpool (2021-22 Cohort), **Myriam Hernández Vazquez** (2021-22 Cohort), **Craig Dube** (2018-19 Cohort), **Jite Phido** (2021-22 Cohort), **Jack Nissan** (2017-18 Cohort), **Kruskaya Hidalgo Cordero** (2021-22 Cohort)

INNOVATION AND EQUITY FOR E-PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

Photo credit: Jacques Nel via Unsplash



The Lab explored the potential of digital participation tools to enhance public engagement in local governance. By focusing on South Africa's Integrated Development Plan (IDP) process, the Lab examined the barriers and opportunities for technology-driven citizen participation while fostering discussions on responsible and inclusive digital governance.

The project's main activities and outputs included: workshop preparation and a literature review; hosting an in-person workshop that brought together practitioners from public, private, and civil society sectors to analyse South Africa's IDP process and identify challenges and opportunities for technology-assisted public participation; project plan development for an Augmented Participation initiative to integrate technology into local governance; and a blog post publication.

FELLOWS:

Gabriella Razzano (2018-19 Cohort), **Maria Carrasco** (2020-21 Cohort), **Jenny McEneaney** (2021-22 Cohort), **Myriam Hernández Vazquez** (2021-22 Cohort)

AUNTIES IN ENGLAND: EXPLORING STORIES OF IRISH IMMIGRATION, IDENTITIES, AND CONNECTIONS TO HOME



Photo credit: Carl Goodwin

The "Aunties in England" project documents the experiences of Irish women who emigrated to London between the 1960s and 1990s, exploring their reasons for leaving, their adaptation to life in England, and their evolving sense of identity. Through a series of oral history interviews, the project sheds light on the challenges these women faced, from discrimination to cultural adjustment, while also capturing their resilience and contributions to both British and Irish communities.

The Lab's main activities included: conducting oral history interviews with 15 Irish women in London and Ireland, highlighting personal narratives of migration and identity; conducting an interview with Catherine Dunne, author of *An Unconsidered People*, collaborating with community organisations Ashford Place and the London Irish Centre for outreach, participant engagement, and podcast hosting; producing a podcast series; and hosting a launch event at the Irish Embassy in London.

The project's outputs included producing a six-part podcast series called *Aunties in England*, offering insights into themes of migration, belonging, and intergenerational connections. The podcast series is available to listen to on all platforms, including Spotify and Apple Podcasts. The other output was hosting a launch event at the Irish Embassy in London in June 2025 to bring together community members, oral history experts, and the fellowship network to celebrate and discuss the findings.

FELLOWS:

Jenny McEneaney (2021-22 Cohort), **Michaela Rafferty** (2019-20 Cohort), **Nicola Browne** (2018-19 Cohort), **Clare MacGillivray** (2021-22 Cohort)

CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICES IN TACKLING INEQUALITIES



Photo credit: Lorenzo Zunino via Unsplash

The “Children’s and young people’s voices in tackling inequalities” project explored the role of young people in addressing social inequalities across different cultural and geographical contexts. The project strengthened connections between Fellows working with young people across different regions, fostering international collaboration and mutual learning.

Shadowing visits constituted the main activity of the project. Four members of the team shadowed other members’ work and projects. Louis Oyaro shadowed Jack Nissan at Tinderbox in Edinburgh, Scotland; Jack Nissan and Maureen Sigauke shadowed Roseline Orwa at Rona Foundation in Siaya, Kenya; and Roseline Orwa shadowed Kitti Baracsi and her projects in Lisbon, Portugal. Through these visits, Fellows learned about how youth-led and community-based initiatives operate in diverse settings and what innovative practices empower young people to be active participants in shaping fairer societies.

FELLOWS:

Louis Oyaro (2017-18 Cohort), **Mirilove Tay Acquah-Hagan** (2020-21 Cohort), **Kitti Baracsi** (2020-21 Cohort), **Jack Nissan** (2017-18 Cohort), **Roseline Orwa** (2018-19 Cohort), **Maureen Sigauke** (2018-19 Cohort), **Michaela Rafferty** (2019-20 Cohort)

RESHAPING RIGHTS IN THE AGE OF INEQUALITIES

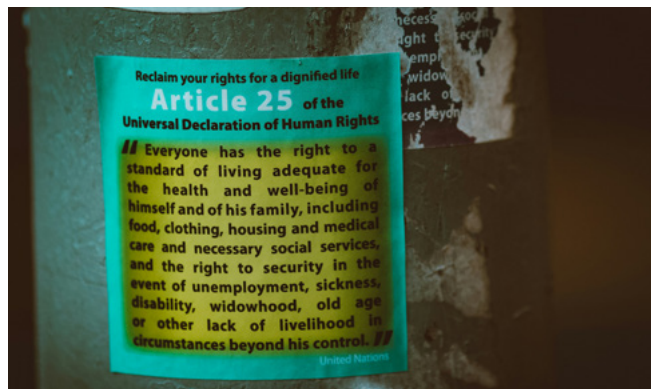


Photo credit: Jon Tyson via Unsplash

The “Reshaping rights in the age of inequalities” project explores how human rights frameworks can be adapted to address contemporary global inequalities. Through collaborative writing and knowledge exchange, this project brings together Atlantic Fellows to critically engage with the challenges and possibilities of reshaping rights-based approaches in today’s world.

Key activities and outputs included a three-day in-person workshop in Paris, where Fellows developed a book proposal, drafted initial chapters, and provided peer feedback on submissions. Additionally, a three-day writing workshop in Cape Town, co-funded by the Atlantic Institute, brought together 14 Fellows from both AFSEE and the broader Atlantic Fellows Programme. The project laid the groundwork for an edited volume that will provide fresh perspectives on human rights and inequality.

FELLOWS:

Fola Adeleke (2017-18 Cohort), **Allison Corkery** (2018-19 Cohort), **Sergio Chaparro-Hernandez** (2021-22 Cohort), **Imogen Richmond-Bishop** (2020-21 Cohort), **Danilo Ćurčić** (2020-21 Cohort)

DECOLONISING FUNDING AND PHILANTHROPY IN AFRICA FOR EQUITY AND INCLUSION



Photo Credit: James Wiseman via Unsplash

The “Decolonising funding and philanthropy in Africa for equity and inclusion” project examines how historical legacies, power dynamics, and systemic inequalities shape development funding across the African continent. Through a collection of essays, this project amplifies African voices and proposes alternative, more equitable funding models. The initiative aims to reimagine philanthropy and resource mobilisation in ways that empower African communities and organisations.

The project has curated seven essays that explore decolonisation in African philanthropy, offering fresh insights and actionable solutions. The compendium is undergoing final editing and design, with plans for publication and dissemination in 2025. Next steps include a virtual and in-person launch event, engagement with key stakeholders, and participation in regional philanthropy discussions. The project aspires to foster long-term dialogue on equitable funding models that prioritise African agency and leadership.

FELLOWS:

Caroline Kioko (2021-22 Cohort), **Jite Phido** (2021-22 Cohort), **Mohammed-Anwar Sadat Adam** (2020-21 Cohort), **Irene Wakarindi** (2020-21 Cohort), **Makmid Kamara** (2021-22 Cohort)

JUST HOUSING FOR ALL



Photo Credit: Steven Wei via Unsplash

This project connected activists, researchers, artists, and policymakers across Latin America and Europe to address the global housing crisis by dispelling myths and amplifying voices of housing movements. Through its collaborative and multidisciplinary approach, the project underscored the importance of grassroots organising, community connections, and tailoring research to local contexts. By bridging academic and activist knowledge, the project aims to inspire collective action and policy change to address housing inequalities worldwide.

The Lab organised the following activities: a webinar on “Interzones: art, research, and housing activism”; a webinar on “How do we achieve just and fair housing policies?”; a webinar on “The financialisation of housing in Latin America: experiences from Buenos Aires and Santiago de Chile”; and a key in-person meeting in Berlin revolved around housing justice organising and mobilisation.

FELLOWS:

Kitti Baracsi (2020-21 Cohort), **Máximo E Jaramillo-Molina** (2020-21 Cohort), **Danilo Ćurčić** (2020-21 Cohort), **Imogen Richmond Bishop** (2020-21 Cohort), **Michaela Rafferty** (2019-20 Cohort), **Rosario Fassina** (2022-23 Cohort)

(RE)BUILDING SOLIDARITY INCUBATION LAB



Image credit: Ruby Hembrom

This project brought together a diverse group of Fellows to explore and strengthen solidarity within the AFSEE community and beyond. Through meaningful conversations, creative reflections, and collaborative activities, the Lab sought to deepen collective understanding of solidarity and its challenges and opportunities in a rapidly changing world.

The Lab provided a unique space for Fellows to reflect on their work in solidarity and reimagine approaches to activism and community-building. Moving forward, the Lab aims to continue hosting solidarity drop-ins, expanding the podcast series, and exploring the intersections of solidarity with burnout, joy, and creativity. The goal is to foster deeper engagement, meaningful connections, and sustained action for social justice within and beyond the AFSEE community.

The project's main activities and outputs included: engaging with AFSEE Fellows through interviews to gather insights on solidarity practices, challenges and need; hosting a Reimagining Workshop in London with seven Fellows, fostering creative discussions and reflections; recording and publishing a podcast series titled *People vs Inequality* exploring solidarity through different perspectives and experiences; publishing a blog post on the AFSEE blog; and publishing a digital publication sharing insights from the project, exploring reflections on solidarity, and featuring creative contributions from Fellows.

FELLOWS:

Amanda Segnini (2021-22 Cohort), **Barbara van Paassen** (2020-21 Cohort), **Ruby Hembrom** (2021-22 Cohort), **Lyla Adwan-Kamara** (2023-24 Cohort)

CREATING PEER SUPPORT AND SHARED LEARNING SPACES FOR ATLANTIC FELLOWS AND THEIR NETWORKS IN CLIMATE JUSTICE MOVEMENTS



Photo credit: Markus Spiske via Unsplash

This project was established to create peer support and shared learning spaces for Atlantic Fellows and their networks within climate justice movements. The Lab aims to foster collaboration, knowledge exchange, emotional resilience, and capacity building among Fellows engaged in climate action.

The main activities and outputs included: establishing a network of 30 Atlantic Fellows working on climate action; hosting peer support sessions with one taking place before COP29, providing Fellows attending the summit with a space to share their work and receive feedback on the challenges they faced, and two sessions after COP29, to reflect on key insights and share lessons with the broader Atlantic Fellows community; the Act on Climate Convening, which took place from 14 to 18 October 2024 in Bogotá, Colombia and was funded by the Atlantic Institute; and *Climate Convening* podcasts produced by the Atlantic Institute to highlight learning from the convening, which members of the Lab were interviewed for.

FELLOWS:

Lauren Burke (2018-19 Cohort), **Sergio Chaparro Hernandez** (2021-22 Cohort), **Amanda Segnini** (2021-22 Cohort), **Maria Carrasco** (2020-21 Cohort), **Madhuresh Kumar** (2021-22 Cohort)

SECOND ROUND OF AFSEE INCUBATION LABS

In spring 2025, the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Programme announced a new call for the second round of Incubation Labs, open to all Fellows from the 2017-18 Cohort to the 2024-25 Cohort. An online information session was held on Thursday 10 April 2025, to provide guidance and a space for Fellows to brainstorm new Incubation Labs. Applications were due by Friday 30 May 2025.

In response to the call, AFSEE received 11 Incubation Lab applications from Fellows from all Cohorts. New and existing Incubation Labs were encouraged to apply, with existing Labs required to introduce new activities and outputs distinct from previous work. Forty-six Fellows applied to the Incubation Labs and seven Fellows applied for more than one Lab.



Panel discussion at the Aunties in England Incubation Lab Launch Event.

OUR NODE PARTNERS

As part of its strategic plan, the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Programme aims to foster a vibrant, global network of distinguished academic institutions that are deeply engaged with understanding and challenging inequalities. Developing strong and sustainable partnerships requires a shared commitment from partners to understand the causes and consequences of inequality and to actively seek solutions to tackle inequality.

External Node partners are expected to demonstrate:

- A strong record in interdisciplinary research and teaching on inequality.
- Regional expertise and networks related to the geography in which they are located.
- Contributions to AFSEE teaching and mentoring Fellows (where applicable).
- Support for AFSEE's recruitment, outreach and networking.

A Node partner is a well-established organisation that shares the AFSEE Programme's values and research interests and is committed to collaborating on the delivery of a sustainable and impactful programme of learning, research, outreach, and knowledge exchange.

The AFSEE Programme offers support to Node partners via the Network Innovation Fund (NIF). NIF projects are expected to focus on researching topics/questions related to social and/or economic equity; contribute to the curriculum of the AFSEE Programme and to at least one of the International Inequalities Institute's (III) research themes²⁷.



Center on International Cooperation, New York University

The Center on International Cooperation (CIC) is a non-profit research centre housed at New York University (NYU). Its mission is to strengthen cooperative approaches among national governments, international organisations, and the wider policy community to advance peace, justice and inclusion. As part of the partnership, AFSEE Senior Fellows will have the opportunity to contribute to CIC's inequality solutions portal and participate in visiting fellowships at NYU. CIC and AFSEE also collaborated on a research project, "Urban glory for the few: extreme urban inequality and its impacts on access to housing in Kinshasa (DRC)".

Urban glory for the few: housing inequality in Kinshasa

This research project, undertaken by NYU CIC as part of its partnership with AFSEE and funded via the Network Innovation Fund (NIF), investigated the extreme urban inequality characterising housing access in Kinshasa. It explored how financialisation, weak governance, and state capture shape the city's housing landscape, marginalising the majority while privileging high-end developments aimed at elites.

The project produced two publications: "Who will cities be for?" (April 2024) and "Urbanization for the few" (February 2025), with the latter translated into French to enhance local impact. Research drew on historical and contemporary analysis, revealing how informal, self-built housing remains the only viable option for most residents, despite growing risks of eviction and climate vulnerability.

²⁷ LSE, [Politics of Inequality](#). Published on LSE.AC.UK.

Three public roundtables convened diverse stakeholders including AFSEE Fellows, researchers, activists and local leaders to inform the work, culminating in the Kinshasa case study. These convenings created space for knowledge exchange on inclusive housing policy and advanced local-global advocacy linkages.

Outputs reached broad audiences via International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) articles, BBC interviews, social media and a short film, with another French-language video forthcoming. The project contributed to building research and advocacy capacity in Kinshasa and strengthened collaborations among African and international housing justice actors.

PROJECT TEAM:

Fernando Marani, Pathfinders Program Director, Center on International Cooperation, New York University; **Raquel Jesse**, Program Officer (Inequality & Exclusion), Center on International Cooperation, New York University; **Dr Roshni Menon**, Senior Program Officer (Inequality & Exclusion), Center on International Cooperation, New York University; **Paula Sevilla Núñez**, Non-Resident Fellow, Center on International Cooperation, New York University.



Centre for the Study of Conflict and Social Cohesion, Chile

The Centre for the Study of Conflict and Social Cohesion (COES) is our programme's primary and longest-standing research and outreach partner in Latin America. It undertakes collaborative research on issues related to social conflict and cohesion in Chile through a multidisciplinary team drawn from the social sciences and humanities. Launched in 2022, COES and AFSEE collaborated on a research project, "Conflicted identities for social justice? Exploring female economic and political elites in Chile and the UK", under the NIF.

Conflicted identities for social justice? Exploring female economic and political elites in Chile and the UK

Funded by AFSEE's Network Innovation Fund (NIF), the research explores how women in senior political and economic positions in Chile and the UK view and navigate power, privilege, and their roles in promoting (or resisting) social justice and cohesion. It interrogates how these women experience being simultaneously "insiders" and "outsiders" within elite power structures, and how their perspectives may challenge or reinforce prevailing social and political norms.

Over the past year, the team completed over 30 in-depth interviews using a shared interview grid, ensuring data comparability across countries.

There are two main outputs of the project.

1. The first is a chapter in the *Handbook of Sociology of Global Elites*, edited by Mike Savage, Annette Lareau and María Luisa Mendez:

Theodore, Rachel, Castillo, Isabel, Reyes-Housholder, Catherine, "Women economic elites as 'insiders and outsiders' in Chile". This chapter explores how Chilean women who occupy high positions in the business world think about, access, and navigate power. While most research on gender and elites has focused on the

United States and Europe and women's roles as wealthy wives, we examine women in Chile - one of the most economically unequal countries - who meet positional criteria as business elites. Drawing on original interviews and publicly available archives, we argue that these women constitute both "insiders and outsiders" (Savage, 2021, p. 180-182). First, we find that to become insiders, these women rely on strong personal skills, social capital, and networking. Second, as outsiders, they recall gendered challenges in accessing and navigating power and maintain critical views about the structure of power. In this duality of insiders/outsiders, these women see themselves as role models and mentors for other women, engaging in "honeycomb networking," a mutually supportive network.

2. The second output is an article, on which the UK and Chilean team have been working on since March 2025, meeting every two weeks. The respective country teams have analysed their data thematically, focusing on both deductive and inductive codes. Additionally, the Chilean team has translated relevant data from their interviews for the UK team to facilitate comparison of the data. Currently, the country teams are working together on the international comparison of the interview data. The team hopes to have the article ready by the end of 2025.

PROJECT TEAM:

Dr Catherine Reyes-Housholder, Associate Professor, Instituto de Ciencia Política, Universidad Católica de Chile and Associate Researcher, COES; **Dr Rachel Théodore**, Chile-based Researcher, Assistant Professor, Centre for Economics and Social Policy, Universidad Mayor and Adjunct Researcher, COES; **Dr Isabel Castillo**, Chile-based Researcher, Assistant Professor, Universidad de Chile and Adjunct Researcher, COES; **Dr Elisabeth Schimpfössl**, UK-based Researcher, Senior Lecturer, Aston University and Visiting Senior Fellow, LSE III; **Dr Katharina Hecht**, UK-based Researcher, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Northeastern University and Visiting Fellow, LSE III; **Dr Chana Teege**, UK-based Researcher, Assistant Professor, Department of Methodology, LSE and Faculty Associate, LSE III; **Felipe Bustos**, Research Assistant, COES; **Jennifer Willmott**, Research Assistant, Aston University; **Matt Reynolds**, Research Assistant, PhD Candidate, Department of Sociology, LSE.

PARTNER HIGHLIGHT

Partnering with organisations across the world is important for the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) community, as it provides diverse skills development opportunities for AFSEE Fellows, increases the impact of the AFSEE Programme and AFSEE Fellows' work and through that advances its overall mission to advance social and economic equity through collaboration and innovation.

Rethinking activism in Africa: enhancing civic leadership in a time of uncertainty and transition

In 2024, the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) Programme launched a collaborative project on, "Rethinking activism in Africa: enhancing civic leadership in a time of uncertainty and transition" with colleagues from the University of Cape Town (UCT) Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance.

This exciting collaboration between AFSEE and UCT aims to unearth new ideas and solutions, driving forward the debate and new thinking regarding the potential and limits of civil society activism in advancing equality in Africa. It was curated by UCT colleagues Mark Heywood (Project Lead) and Penny Parenzee in collaboration with Professor Armine Ishkanian, AFSEE Executive Director and Grace Farrell-Twiney, AFSEE Partnerships Lead and implemented by Asmaa Akhtar, AFSEE Partnerships Lead (maternity cover) and Wendy Hendricks and Veleska Maphike from the Nelson Mandela School.

While civil society actors across the continent have been active in leading initiatives to address and tackle inequalities, there is growing evidence that progress in narrowing inequality has stalled. In addition, in many countries "civic space" is closing. It is time to reassess these strategies, to ask questions about power, people and what it will require for civil society to reignite sustainable progress towards equality in Africa, which is what the project aims to do.



AFSEE Fellows, Global Atlantic Fellows, AFSEE team members, and Nelson Mandela School team members at the Bertha Retreat, Boschendal, Cape Town.

HOW THE PROJECT BEGAN

The "Rethinking activism in Africa" project began with a provocation essay titled, "Rethinking activism in a time of desperation and despair"²⁸ written by the Project Lead, Mark Heywood, a South African human rights and social justice activist and a researcher at the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance. The project progressed with two webinars, "Rethinking activism in Africa: how activists work with the state and other core stakeholders", hosted in December 2024, and "Rethinking activism to overcome inequality in Africa", hosted in January 2025.

Following the webinars where speakers provided key insights, AFSEE Fellows and Global Atlantic Fellows who are based in or are from Africa were invited to submit an abstract for consideration to be included in the book of essays titled *Rethinking Activism in Africa*. Following a competitive review process, 14 Fellows selected from across five Atlantic Fellows Programmes were invited to join this project and to further develop their proposed chapter. As a part of this process, they were assigned a mentor working at the Nelson Mandela School and were also invited to attend a writing retreat to brainstorm innovative ideas and solutions for activism in Africa.

²⁸ UCT, *Rethinking activism in a time of desperation and despair*. Published on UCT.AC.ZA.

THE SELECTION OF FELLOWS

The AFSEE Fellows selected to participate in this project were Aisha Abdulaziz (2021-22 Cohort), Henintsoa Daniel Rakotoarison (2023-24 Cohort), Josephine Chiname (2023-24 Cohort), Masana Mulaudzi (2017-18 Cohort), Mohammed-Anwar Sadat Adam (2020-21 Cohort), Tracy Jooste (2017-18 Cohort), and Yara Shawky (2023-24 Cohort).

The AFSEE Programme invited Fellows from the following four Atlantic Fellows Programmes to also participate in the project. These Fellows are: Lazarus Eze from the Atlantic Fellows for Equity in Brain Health (GBHI); Marx Itabelo Lwabanya and Mildred Omino from Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity (AFHE US + Global); Lebohang Molete, Zandile Mqwathi, and Nangamso Koza from Atlantic Fellows in Health Equity in South Africa (TEKANO); and Emile Lester Jansen from Atlantic Fellows for Racial Equity (AFRE).

THE WRITING RETREAT

The retreat, which took place from 20 to 23 May 2025 in Cape Town, was a key part of the project. The 14 Fellows came together over three days to discuss their contributions to the book of essays.

"We at AFSEE are very proud to be supporting this timely project with our colleagues from UCT. Mark and Penny did an amazing job in curating and facilitating the retreat. I would also like to thank the writing tutors, Brian Raftopoulos and Hafte Gebrihet, for their contributions and for the engaging fireside chats. I learned so much from the discussions we had during the retreat, and I look forward to seeing the essays come together in the special edited volume."

Professor Armine Ishkanian,
AFSEE Executive Director

AFSEE Senior Fellow Masana Mulaudzi expressed,

"Our time together at the writing retreat reminded me why I am so grateful to be counted among such thoughtful, empathetic and curious Fellows: everyone leaned in to imagining a future for the world, to building bridges across disciplines and contexts, and to embodying our shared values. It was honestly one of the most significant co-creation spaces I have been to in such a long time!"

The "Rethinking activism in Africa" project will culminate in a book of essays written by the project members who attended the retreat. The book is expected to be published in late 2025, which will be celebrated with planned book launch events in London at The London School of Economics and Political Science, and in Cape Town at the Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance.

Residential creative communications programme at Hawkwood, The Centre for Future Thinking

From July 21 to 25, the Atlantic Fellows for Social and Economic Equity (AFSEE) programme hosted a residential creative communications programme at Hawkwood, The Centre for Future Thinking²⁹ for a group of AFSEE Senior Fellows.

Hawkwood is an arts and educational charity that provides courses and facilitates training, situated in a rural location in the Cotswolds, England. Hawkwood has been running for over 75 years, offering a curated programme and space for learning and residencies in the arts, wellbeing, sustainability, and transformative leadership.



AFSEE Fellows and team members at the residential creative communications programme at the Hawkwood Centre for Future Thinking in the Cotswolds, England.

²⁹ Hawkwood, The Centre for Future Thinking. Published on <https://www.hawkwoodcollege.co.uk/>

AFSEE collaborated with Alicia Carey, CEO of Hawkwood, and her team over the past year to design a bespoke creative communications programme for AFSEE Senior Fellows. This year marks the first of a three-year partnership with Hawkwood.

"We believe creativity, personal development, and a connection to the natural world can inspire individuals and society to shape a more equitable, sustainable future."

Alicia Carey, CEO of Hawkwood

The specially curated weeklong residential programme provided Senior Fellows with an opportunity to deepen their understanding of creative communications and storytelling. Attendees had the time and space to develop their creative communication projects, with the environment specially designed to encourage growth and focus.

After a competitive application process, this year's selected Fellows were: Ahmad Abu Hussien (2023-24 Cohort), Amanda Segnini (2021-2022 Cohort), Eko Octavianus (2023-24 Cohort), Esther Mwema (2019-20 Cohort), Jane Sloane (2017-18 Cohort), Katy Rubin (2023-24 Cohort), Kruskaya Hidalgo Cordero (2021-22 Cohort), Lily Jamaludin (2022-23 Cohort), Madhuresh Kumar (2021-22 Cohort), Mauro Fernández (2020-21 Cohort), Mohammed-Anwar Sadat Adam (2020-21 Cohort), Stephanie Akinwoya (2022-23 Cohort), and Tyehimba Salandy (2020-21 Cohort).

"To sustain the work I do — advancing labour struggles, facilitating workshops, training workers, strategising, and organising with unions — it's essential to pause, to breathe, and to reconnect with creativity. This retreat was an opportunity to learn, to find inspiration, and to return with new tools not only for my own practice, but for the everyday work of collective organising as well."

Kruskaya Hidalgo Cordero,
AFSEE Senior Fellow (2021-22 Cohort)

The programme included sessions on various aspects of creative communications, such as how writing can contribute to social change and how to navigate breaking into the publishing industry. Speakers included Alice Jolly, Ally Wilkes, Lisa McKenzie, Oli Munson, and Tatevik Sarsgyan. AFSEE was also excited to welcome two AFSEE Senior Fellows, Katy Rubin (2023-24 Cohort) and Ruby Hembrom (2021-22 Cohort), along with Dana Walrath, from the Atlantic Fellows for Equity in Brain Health (GBHI), to conduct panel sessions.

Along with the daily panel sessions, ample time in the programme was dedicated for Fellows to focus on their individual writing. Fellows also met one-on-one with their writing tutors, Arji Manuelpillai, Catherine Davidson, and Esme Allman, and received feedback on their work.

The retreat focused on a specific theme each day: Connect, Feel, Dream, Play & Improvise, and Action. As well as the creative writing activities, the Fellows took part in various wellbeing activities. Most mornings began with a wellbeing activity such as forest bathing, rest, tai chi, or yoga.

Madhuresh Kumar (2021-22 Cohort) shared his thoughts on one of the activities, 'I joined a forest bathing session, an ancient Japanese practice of slowing down, awakening the senses, and reconnecting with nature. It wasn't just a walk in the woods; it was an invitation to pause, breathe, and notice the life teeming around us.'

AFSEE is looking forward to continuing the residential creative communications program with Hawkwood, The Centre for Future Thinking over the next two years, offering an opportunity for the AFSEE community to come together, learn from one other, and enhance their storytelling and creative communication skills with guidance from the dedicated Hawkwood Team and other experts in the field.

"Thank you to Alicia Carey and the Hawkwood team for hosting the Atlantic Fellows for Social & Economic Equity for a writing retreat. It was a week filled with inspiring discussions and writing in incredibly beautiful surroundings. Thank you also to the wonderful speakers and tutors for making the week so special."

Professor Armine Ishkanian,
AFSEE Executive Director

OUR FELLOWS



2017/18

Appu Suresh (India) - Founder and CEO, Pixstory

Fola Adeleke (Nigeria/Canada) - Executive Director, Global Center on AI Governance

Fredrick Ouko Alucheli (Kenya) - Co-Chief Executive and Transformation Officer, ADD International

Hillary Vipond (Canada/UK) - PhD Candidate, LSE Department of Economic History

Jack Nissan (UK) - Founder, Tinderbox Collective

Jane Sloane (Australia/USA) - Senior Director on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality, The Asia Foundation

Joey Hasson (Zimbabwe/UK) - Senior Programme Officer for Human Rights, Sigrid Rausing Trust

Johnny Miller (USA/South Africa) - Photographer and Founder, Unequal Scenes

Louis Oyaro (Uganda/Germany) - Human Rights Consultant

Louise Russell-Prywata (UK) - Deputy Executive Director, Open Ownership

Masana Mulaudzi (South Africa) - Senior Campaigns Manager, Wikimedia Foundation

Melanie Brown (USA) - Deputy Director of Global Policy and Advocacy, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Priyanka Kotamraju (India/UK) - PhD Candidate in Sociology, University of Cambridge

Rania Tarazi (Jordan) - Gender and Development Professional

Rose Longhurst (UK/Germany) - Head of Democratic Renewal Team, Open Society Foundations

Saida Ali (Kenya) - International Policy Analyst and Strategist

Sebastian Bock (Germany) - Director for Germany, Transport and Environment

Tracy Jooste (South Africa) - Associate Director of the Governance Action Hub, Results for Development

2018/19

Allison Corkery (Australia/South Africa) - Director, Law Programme, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing

Anita Peña Saavedra (Chile) - Head of International Affairs at the Ministry of Women and Gender Equality, Government of Chile

Anjali Sarker (Bangladesh/UK) - Programme Director of the Global Leadership Challenge, University of Oxford

Craig Tinashe Dube (Zimbabwe/Netherlands) - Training Coordinator, No Means No Worldwide

Elimane Haby Kane (Senegal) - Founder and Chairman, LEGS-Africa

Gabriella Razzano (South Africa) - Executive Director, OpenUp

James Muraguri (Kenya) - Founder and CEO, Institute of Public Finance

Kripa Basnyat (Nepal) - National Project Coordinator, International Labor Organization

Lauren Burke (USA) - Deputy Director of State Affairs, BlueGreen Alliance

Maureen Sigauke (Zimbabwe) - Community Organiser and Activist

Milanoi Koiyiet (Kenya) - Co-Founder, Center for Women's Rights Advocacy

Milena Abrahamyan (Armenia) - Feminist Justice and Peace Activist

Nicola Browne (UK/Northern Ireland) - Founder and Executive Director, Act Now

Pedro Telles (Brazil) - Director, D-Hub

Renata Ćuk (Croatia/UK) - Director of Programmes, Ariadne Network

Roseline Orwa (Kenya) - Founder and CEO, Rona Foundation

Tanya Charles (Zimbabwe/UK) - Senior Program and Impact Lead, Atlantic Institute

Taylor Downs (USA/UK) - Founder and CEO, OpenFn



2019/20

Alon-Lee Green (Israel) - National Co-Director, Standing Together

Amanda Young (Australia) - Executive Director, Pollination

Asha Kowtal (India) - Feminist Organiser and Activist

Crystal Simeoni (Kenya) - Director, NAWI: Afrifem Macroeconomics Collective

Della Duncan (USA) - Renegade Economist

Esther Mwema (Zambia) - Artist and Digital Inequalities Expert

Foluke Adetola Ojelabi (Nigeria/USA) - Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Specialist, UNICEF

Hobeth Martínez Carrillo (Colombia/UK) - PhD Candidate, LSE Department of Sociology

Joan Jones (USA) - Executive Director, Service Employees International Union – Washington State Council

Leanne Sajor (Philippines/USA) - Labour Rights and Gender Justice Advocate

Liz Nelson (UK) - Director of Advocacy and Research, Tax Justice Network

Madhumitha Ardhanari (Singapore/UK) - Climate Justice Activist and PhD Candidate, University of Exeter and University of Queensland

Michaela Rafferty (Ireland) - Youth Engagement and Campaigns Organiser, Just for Kids Law

Sophea Chrek (Cambodia) - Coordinator, Social Action for Community and Development

2020/21

Andrea Encalada García (Chile) - Chief Advisor for the Ministry of Education, Government of Chile

Barbara van Paassen (Netherlands) - Feminist Economics and Climate Justice Advocate

Christopher Choong Weng Wai (Malaysia/UK) - PhD Candidate, University of Warwick

Claire Godfrey (UK) - Public Policy Specialist and Campaign Strategist

Danilo Ćurčić (Serbia) - Programme Coordinator, A 11 – Initiative for Economic and Social Rights

Georgia Haddad Nicolau (Brazil) - Co-Founder and Director, Instituto Procomum

Imogen Richmond-Bishop (UK) - Advisor on ESCR and Tech, Amnesty International

Irene Wakarindi (Kenya/UK) - Program Officer on Resettlement and Integration, International Organization for Migration

Kitti Baracsi (Hungary/Portugal) - Critical Educator and Curator of Community and Cultural Initiatives

Maria Carrasco (Chile) - Co-Founder and Director, Entramada

Máximo Ernesto Jaramillo-Molina (Mexico) - Co-Founder, Institute of Studies on Inequality

Mauro Fernández (Argentina) - Founder and President, Sociedad y Naturaleza

Mirilove Tay Acquah-Hagan (Ghana) - Women and Youth Prosperity Advocate

Mohammed-Anwar Sadat Adam (Ghana) - Programmes and Policy Influencing Lead, Oxfam in Ghana

Oabona Sepora (Botswana) - Executive Director, Friends of Diversity

Tyehimba Salandy (Trinidad and Tobago) - Sociologist, University of the West Indies

Viviana Osorio Perez (Colombia) - Economic and Social Rights Consultant

OUR FELLOWS CON'D



2021/22

Aisha Abdulaziz (Kenya/UK) - Energy Access Specialist

Amanda Segnini (Brazil) - Climate Justice Activist and Campaigner

Caroline Kioko (Kenya) - Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Manager, Porticus Global

Clare MacGillivray (Scotland) - Director, Making Rights Real

Daniel Salazar Murillo (Costa Rica/UK) - Data Insight Analyst, Atlantic Institute

Ishrat Jahan (India) - South Asia Lead for 1t.org, World Economic Forum

Jenny McEaney (Ireland) - Senior Improvement Policy Adviser on Cyber, Digital and Technology, Local Government Association

Jite Phido (Nigeria/UK) - Senior Program Manager for Innovation, Results for Development

Kevin Liverpool (Trinidad and Tobago) - Gender Equality Advocate

Kruskaya Hidalgo Cordero (Ecuador/Mexico) - Co-Founder, Observatorio de Plataformas

Madhuresh Kumar (India/France) - Climate Justice Activist and Researcher

Makmid Kamara (Sierra Leone/Ghana) - Regional Director for Africa and Middle East, International Fund for Public Interest Media

Myriam Hernández Vazquez (Mexico) - LAC Regional Coordinator at the Fight Inequality Alliance and Independent VR Producer

Rafael Barrio de Mendoza Zevallos (Peru/UK) - PhD Candidate, University of Cambridge

Ruby Hembrom (India) - Founder, Adivaani

Sergio Chaparro Hernandez (Colombia) - International Policy and Advocacy Lead, Tax Justice Network

Zephania Repollo (Philippines) - Southeast Asia Director, Just Associates

2022/23

Carlos Brown Solà (Mexico) - Director of Research and Fiscal Justice, Oxfam México

Enamul Mazid Khan Siddique (Bangladesh/UK) - Activist and Civil Society Professional

Gabriela Valencia (Panama) - Housing and Urban Development Consultant, Inter-American Development Bank

Hamidreza Vasheghanifarahani (Iran/UK) - Researcher and Civil Society Professional

James Aung (Myanmar/UK) - Operations Manager, Organic Roots Myanmar

Leah Eryenyu (Uganda) - Lead for Gender Just Economy Learning Community, Trust, Accountability and Inclusion Collaborative

Lily Jamaludin (Malaysia/UK) - Campaign Manager, Small Axe

Naledi Maite (South Africa) - Feminist Movement Builder and Civil Society Professional

Priyanka Jain (India) - Labour Activist and Researcher

Rhomir Yanquiling (Philippines) - Head of the Knowledge Management and Policy Unit, Nature Sustainability and Local Development Center

Roos Saalbrink (Netherlands/UK) - Global Lead on Economic Justice and Public Services, ActionAid International

Rosario Fassina (Argentina) - Right to Housing Researcher and Activist

Salman Usmani (India) - Digital Communications Specialist

Sebastian Ignacio Muñoz Pérez (Chile/UK) - Co-Founder, Laboratorio 9x18 at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

Stephanie Nwaoroni Akinwoya (Nigeria/UK) - PhD Candidate, The Open University

T O Molefe (South Africa/Switzerland) - Publications Director, Atlantic Fellows for Racial Equity and Coordinator, Collective Media Cooperative Limited



2023/24

Ahmad Zeyad Abu Hussien (Jordan) - Urban Sociologist

Diana Magdy (Egypt) - Feminist Researcher and Gender Equality Specialist

Eko Octavianus (Indonesia) - Co-Founder, KOLEKTIF

Henintsoa Daniel Rakotoarison (Madagascar) - Child and Youth Care Specialist and Social Protection Services Manager

Josephine Chiname (Zimbabwe) - Social and Environmental Justice Lawyer

Katy Rubin (USA/UK) - Legislative Theatre Practitioner and Creative Civic Strategist

Lyla Adwan-Kamara (UK/Ghana) - Disability and Mental Health Specialist

Manar Alzrai (Palestine) - Teacher, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Mavis A Koogotsitse (Botswana) - Executive Secretary, Southern Africa Trade Union Coordination Council

Najma Mohamed (South Africa/UK) - Head of Nature-Based Solutions, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre

Omar Mohammed (Trinidad and Tobago) - Lead, Global Narrative Hive

Pascale Frazer-Carroll (UK) - Campaigner and Social Impact Director

Saba Saeed (Pakistan) - Research Analyst, Unbounded Associates

Stephanie Gomes Reis (Brazil) - Social Scientist

Thomas S Smith (USA) - Senior Director Organizing, Communications Workers of America

Yara Shawky Shahin (Egypt) - Researcher and Civil Society Professional

2024/25

Badrul Hisham Ismail (Malaysia) - Researcher and Arts Practitioner

Dany Díaz Mejía (Honduras) - Storyteller and Democracy Advocate

Fátima Pacas (El Salvador) - Director (Education Program), Cristosal

Jen Ang (Scotland/USA) - Founding Director, Lawmanity

JiHye Jeong (South Korea) - Journalist and Gender Equality Specialist

Juan Cardoza-Oquendo (USA/Puerto Rico) - Programs Director, Houston in Action

Juan David Velasco Montoya (Colombia) - Transitional Justice Researcher and Practitioner

Judit Ignácz (Hungary) - Inclusion and Equity Advisor

Kunsang Tsephel (Tibet) - Director, Empowering the Vision Project

Lucia Makamure (Zimbabwe/South Africa) - Operations and Programme Quality Lead, International Development Economics Associates (IDEAs)

Nik Nasha Damia (Malaysia) - Advisor, Rohingya Women Development Network

Nousha Kabawat (Canada/Syria) - Head of Syria Program, The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ)

Sasha Jattansingh (Trinidad and Tobago) - Loss and Damage Expert, Climate Analytics Caribbean

Solomon Atsuvia (Ghana) - Programmes Manager, Rightify Ghana

Vardini M Sukumar (India) - Independent Researcher

Vicente Silva Didier (Chile/UK) - Tax Justice Policy Advisor

AFSEE TEAM



Professor Armine Ishkanian

Executive Director



Anastasia Nazaryan

Projects Manager



Dr Annalena Oppel

Research Fellow



Asmaa Akhtar

Partnerships Lead
(maternity cover)



Ethan Moss

Programme Administrator



Dr George Kunnath

Academic Lead and
Associate Professor for
Education



Grace Farrell-Twiney

Partnerships Lead (on
maternity leave)



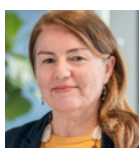
Dr Giannis Efthymiou

Assistant Professorial
Research Fellow in
Innovative Pedagogy



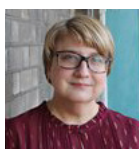
Hala Haidar

Communications and
Marketing Officer



Aygen Kurt-Dickson

Policy Fellow



Jacqui Mujico

Executive Assistant



Liza Ryan

Institute Manager, LSE III



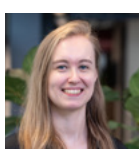
Dr Maël Lavenaire

Research Fellow in Racial
Inequality



Saaga Leppänen

Programme Manager for
Global Engagement and
Impact

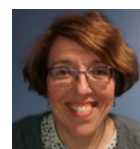


Saara Honkanen

Programme Officer for
Fellowship Experience

AFSEE GOVERNING BOARD

The AFSEE Governing Board provides operational and programmatic oversight and ensures fidelity to the programme's mission, vision, and principles. Its role is to nurture and support our programme's growth and development and to serve as a champion for the programme, both internally and externally.



Dr Claire Gordon

Board Chair



Professor Ernestina Coast

Board Member



Professor Francisco Ferreira

Board Member



Professor Hakan Seckinelgin

Board Member



Dr Irene Guijt

Board Member



Professor Jenny Pearce

Board Member



Professor Elizabeth Stokoe

Board Member



Professor María-Luisa Mendez

Board Member



Mohammed-Anwar Sadat Adam

Board Member (Senior Fellow Representative)



Professor Naila Kabeer

Board Member



Dr Phuong Nhan Le

Board Member

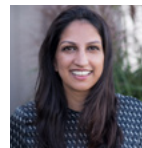
AFSEE PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

The AFSEE Programme Committee, which is chaired by the Executive Director, is a consultative body that provides knowledge and expertise to the programme around key areas including curriculum, programming and outreach.



Professor Armine Ishkanian

Committee Chair



Asmaa Akhtar

Committee Member



Anastasia Nazaryan

Committee Member



Dr George Kunnath

Committee Member



Saaga Leppänen

Committee Member



Katy Rubin

Committee Member, Senior Fellows Representative (2023-24 Cohort)



Tracy Jooste

Committee Member, Senior Fellows Representative (2017-18 Cohort)



Raquel Jesse

Committee Member, from our partner organisation, the Center on International Cooperation, New York University



Selam Bedada

Committee Member from our sister programme, the Atlantic Fellows for Health Equity (AFHE)

The London School of Economics and Political Science is a School of the University of London. It is a charity and is incorporated in England as a company limited by guarantee under the Companies Acts (Reg no 70527).

The School seeks to ensure that people are treated equitably, regardless of age, disability, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation or personal circumstances.

Design: West9 Design (west9design.co.uk)

Hansel Obando (www.hanselobando.com)



@hansel_obando

afsee.atlanticfellows.lse.ac.uk



@AFSEE_LSE