



amerikahaus



Call for Applications: Winter School on Trade and Security 2026

Theme: Liberal Democracy as the Foundation of Western Prosperity and Security

Dates: Friday-Saturday, December 4–5, 2026

Application Deadline: Thursday, November 5, 2026, 11:59 p.m. (CET)

Location: Amerikahaus, Karolinenplatz 3, 80333 Munich, Germany

Organizers: Amerikahaus – Bavarian Center for Transatlantic Relations, FoKS

Overview

The modern economic prosperity and geopolitical security of the Western world are not historical accidents; they are the direct products of liberal democratic frameworks. Principles such as the rule of law, protected property rights, freedom of expression, institutional checks and balances, and open market economies have created the stable, predictable environments necessary for innovation, wealth creation, and societal resilience.

However, this foundation faces severe internal and external pressures. The rise of nationalist, illiberal, and right-wing populist sentiments directly threatens these structures. By eroding trust in independent judiciaries, targeting free press, undermining multilateral alliances, and replacing pluralistic debate with exclusionary rhetoric, these movements challenge the very mechanisms that guarantee long-term stability and economic vitality.

Strengthening liberal democratic values is an essential pillar of contemporary defense and economic strategy. The **Winter School on Trade and Security 2026** provides a critical forum for the next generation of policymakers, researchers, and leaders to analyze how illiberalism actively degrades national security and economic growth, and to develop actionable strategies to reinforce democratic resilience.

Program

The Winter School on Trade and Security 2026 offers an intensive two-day curriculum designed to critically evaluate liberal democracy as an indispensable operational foundation for Euro-Atlantic economic prosperity and collective defense. Through an interdisciplinary blend of theoretical lectures, collaborative policy exercises, formal debates, and interactive crisis simulations, the program equips participants to analyze the systemic risks posed by illiberalism, disinformation, and institutional backsliding, while empowering them to formulate actionable strategies to reinforce democratic and alliance resilience.



amerikahaus



The detailed programming including speaker list will be available soon.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the following prerequisites:

- **Age:** 23 to 30 years old at the time of the program.
- **Academic Background:** Hold a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Political Science, International Relations, Law, Economics, Sociology, or a closely related discipline.
- **Profile:** Young scholars, doctoral candidates, civil servants, policy analysts, and industry professionals working in geopolitical risk, defense, or transatlantic relations.

Application Requirements

To apply, please submit the following materials in English as a single PDF document:

1. **Curriculum Vitae (CV)** detailing academic credentials and relevant professional experience.
2. **Statement of Motivation (max. 500 words)** outlining how your current research or professional practice intersects with democratic resilience, economic security, or transatlantic defense.
3. **Short Essay / Abstract (max. 400 words)** analyzing a specific challenge that nationalist sentiments pose to either European or American security/prosperity.

Participants will be selected on the strength of their application. Submit your complete application package by email to sicherheitspolitik@amerikahaus.de with the subject line:

Application: Winter School Trade & Security 2026 - [Full Name].

Your application will be reviewed by

Dr. Markus Faltermeier – Head of Programs Trade and Security, Amerikahaus – Bavarian Center for Transatlantic Relations

Dr. Lilli Banholzer – Scientific Coordinator, Bavarian Research Alliance for Peace, Conflict and Security

Dr. Timo Lowinger – Scientific Coordinator, Bavarian Research Alliance for Peace, Conflict and Security



amerikahaus



Key Dates & Deadlines

Application Deadline	Thursday, November 5, 2026, 11:59 p.m. (CET)
Notification of Acceptance	Thursday, November 12, 2026
Distribution of Preparatory Readings	Friday, November 27, 2026
Winter School Dates	Friday-Saturday, December 4–5, 2026

Maximum number of participants: 35

A limited number of travel stipends are available for applicants.

Partners and Sponsors: Bayerische Staatskanzlei, YATA Germany, Junge DGAP

