Our 2024 Impact

With a goal of increasing our impact and equipping more leaders with the skills they need to influence policy, the Aspen Tech Policy Hub team launched the Aspen Policy Academy in 2024. The Academy builds on the work of the Hub, which is now one of the Academy's core initiatives. We make sure that people with the right experience – on everything from artificial intelligence to local education – have the right tools to contribute to key decisions that affect the direction of our society.

We're proud to present a snapshot of the impact that our alumni had in 2024, and are excited to build on this impact in new and exciting ways as the Policy Academy.

"The Fellowship broadened what I thought was possible when it came to ways to impact and influence policy."

JESSICA COLE, CO-FOUNDER AND FORMER CEO OF US DIGITAL RESPONSE

People Impact

One way we measure our impact is by the number of our alumni who take on policy roles. In 2024, we celebrated these transitions:

Patrick Beckley, Congressional and Intergovernmental Liaison, Environmental Protection Agency

Meghan Cochran, Acting Chief of Business Operations, US Digital Service

Bindu Gakhar, Special Assistant to the President, Chief Enterprise Applications, the White House

Lili Gangas, Consumer Advisory Committee, Federal Communications Commission

Susan Hendrickson, Interim President and CEO, Human Rights First

Vanessa Kaskiris, Chief Technology Officer, City of Boston

Alex Lee, Head of AI Innovation, WOO – a crypto futures and spot trading platform

Ivy Teng Lei, Chief Digital Strategy Officer, State of California

Rebecca Peters, Earth Action Lead, Goddard Space Flight Center, NASA

Lana Ramjit, National Resource Center for Cybercrimes, AEquitas

Nadia Seestram, Director of the Blue Buffers Program, New York Division of Housing and Community Renewal

Jane Yang, Chief Artificial Intelligence Officer, Administration for Children and Families

"Being able to have this magnitude of impact—I never thought I could do this."

MARCELA ALAVA, FORMER SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY, THE WHITE HOUSE

Policy Impact

We also measure the ways in which our alumni have had direct influence on policy. Here are just some examples of the policy impact they had in 2024:

California passed a law that developed out of a report written by alum **Emily Doyle**. The law requires the state's Natural Resources Agency to prioritize promoting and supporting partnering state agencies and departments in the acquisition and responsible stewardship of state land.

Fellows **Mary-Clare Bosco**, **Jonathan Gilmour**, and **Rebecca Kilberg** convinced the State of Utah to adopt their policy recommendations around monitoring data centers' water usage in the Great Salt Lake Basin. You can read more in their op-ed in *The Salt Lake City Tribune*.

Also in Utah, fellows **Jeanette Jordan**, **Jordan Loewen-Colón**, and **Ayodele Odubela** are working with the state's Office of Artificial Intelligence Policy (OAIP) to adopt their recommendations for creating a public catalog of current AI initiatives, to help make the OAIP more transparent.

Alum **Christine Keung** joined the United Nations' University for Peace in a roundtable discussion on defining "peace innovation" and understanding technology's role in the world's peacemaking efforts, both inside and outside the UN.

Hitting the Ground Running

Though the Aspen Policy Academy only launched in October, we came out strong, offering 11 new programs for experts in science, technology, the environment, and nonprofit leadership. These included:

- Short courses for cybersecurity professionals, AI experts, nonprofit advocates, and young climate leaders to teach them how to leverage their expertise to impact policy;
- Webinars on topics like Policy 101 and Writing a Public Comment, to introduce the public to policy change; and
- Timely webinars on current events, such as the Supreme Court's *Loper Bright* decision striking down *Chevron* deference.

We are looking forward to welcoming more new voices to the policy space in 2025!

Check out our full list of programs at aspenpolicyacademy.org.

"The [Aspen Policy Academy] has been very valuable in my policy work and instrumental in this stage of my career."

EMILY DOYLE, FOUNDING MANAGER OF THE CLIMATE RESILIENCE PROGRAM AT CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS FOUNDATION