



Dartmouth College Model United Nations

April 10-12, 2026

Dartmouth Model United Nations 2026

April 10 - 12, 2026

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April 10, 2026

Dear Delegates,

It is our pleasure to welcome you to the seventeenth installment of the Dartmouth Model United Nations conference! Since last year's conference, we have been working tirelessly to prepare to host you once more in Hanover, New Hampshire. Offering a smaller, more dynamic setting, DartMUN stands out as a special conference that will excite both new and veteran participants. Our committees are designed to foster a comfortable yet challenging atmosphere, promoting active engagement and learning through hands-on collaboration. Through attending our conference, we aspire to help you develop both skills and friendships centered around a passion for international cooperation.

This year's committee topics cover a diverse range of subjects, tackling crises ranging from mental health to the collapse of US foreign aid. Newcomers are encouraged to boldly express their ideas, engage in discourse, and build connections with others. Seasoned delegates are invited to lend support to their peers, hone their skills, and further explore the possibilities revealed by collaboration.

Should you have any questions or concerns during the conference, we urge you to approach any member of our staff or secretariat. We eagerly anticipate the opportunity to welcome each of you!

Sincerely,

Rohan Goyal
Secretary-General | DartMUN XVII

Noah Amidon
Director-General | DartMUN XVII

Position Paper Guidelines

The background guide provides you with a framework and structure to continue doing research on your topic and investigating your country's stance. We encourage delegates to further explore the intricacies of the topics and develop creative solutions beyond the background guide.

Position papers are an opportunity for delegates to summarize their research in preparation for the conference. Delegates are strongly encouraged to write position papers for each topic. Below is the general structure for papers that can be adapted depending on your country and committee:

- I. Topic Background: Include a brief summary of the topic and outline your country's past involvement and experience with the issue.
- II. Country Stance: Explain your country's policies and position on the issue, including relevant statistics and research.
- III. Proposed Solutions: Propose and provide further details on possible solutions and identify and analyze potential benefits and drawbacks. Remember that your solutions should reflect your country's policies.

Delegates should write one position paper per topic, with each paper a maximum of one page long (excluding the works cited page). No cover pages. All papers should be single-spaced with standard margins in Times New Roman 12 pt. font. Place the following in the top left-hand corner of both your position papers: committee, country, delegate's name, school, and topic. All sources should be appropriately cited.

Position papers should be submitted using this [Google Form](#) either as a Word document or PDF by March 27th, 11:59 PM EDT. Delegates who do not submit position papers will be ineligible for awards. If you wish for an extension, please email your chair(s). Questions regarding position papers should be directed to the DartMUN email (dartmun@dartmouth.edu).

Google Form Submission: <https://forms.gle/hVD1bqNEgXVfhbR38>

USAID v. DOGE

Committee Directors: Grace Moore, Lucy Vitali, Brendan Brophy, & Elaine Li

Crisis Directors: Luca Nacimiento & Sahithi Medikondla

Welcome Letter

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to Dartmouth College! On behalf of the entire Dartmouth Model United Nations staff, we would like to welcome you and thank you for being a part of the annual Dartmouth Model United Nations Conference this April 2026. We have been working hard to prepare for your arrival, and we look forward to welcoming you to Hanover! We are so excited about this timely topic, and we hope that you will gain experience in the inner workings of the American government throughout our debate this weekend.

Grace Moore is a third-year student from Crystal Lake, Illinois. She is studying Government with minors in International Studies and Public Policy, and she aims to work in international law. At Dartmouth, she is a Dartmouth Political Union Ambassador, Comms Director for the Dartmouth Democrats, an Associate Editor for the Dartmouth Law Journal, and a War and Peace Fellow. She is currently working on a war crimes research project. She interned in the U.S. Department of State during the dismantling of the USAID and is excited to explore this issue with you all!

Lucy Vitali '26 is a student of Government and Public Policy at Dartmouth College from Westwood, Massachusetts, committed to serving others through a career in public service. Prior to chairing this Joint Crisis Committee, Lucy served as Charge d'Affaires and Director-General of DartMUN. She currently serves as the Vice Chair of New Hampshire College Democrats and as Executive Director of the Dartmouth College Democrats, and is a Lead Researcher at the Rockefeller Center's Class of 1964 Policy Research Shop.

Brendan Brophy is a third-year student from Beverly, Massachusetts. He is studying anthropology, biology, and Native American and Indigenous studies. He hopes to work in healthcare regarding social determinants of health. He is also involved with Dartmouth EMS, the Dartmouth running team, and the Dhiya Foundation. He participated in MUN all four years of high school and is excited to see y'all.

Elaine Li is a senior at Dartmouth College from Shanghai, China. She is double-majoring in Economics and Environmental Studies, with a focus on environmental policies. This is her fourth year as a staff member at Dartmouth Model United Nations. At Dartmouth, she is also involved in the Dartmouth Glee Club and Energy Justice Clinic. She snowboards and sings in Dartmouth Glee Club, and she is beyond excited to meet everyone!

Luca Nacimiento is a first-year student from Los Angeles, California. He is studying government, philosophy, and speech, and aims to become a politician. At Dartmouth, he is involved in Dartmouth Democrats, Dartmouth Civics, Great Issues Scholars, and the American Constitution Society. In high school, he was Mock Trial team captain and a competitive gymnast. Luca loves to travel, discuss philosophy and politics, and hike in the mountains. He looks forward to working with you!

Sahithi (Sai) Medikondla is a first-year student from Northbrook, Illinois. She is studying Biological Sciences modified with Quantitative Social Science with minors in Global Health and Public Policy. She aims to be an OB/GYN and work in healthcare administration. At Dartmouth, she is a badminton player, sports writer for *The Dartmouth*, program assistant for Women and Gender Planning under OPAL, and a Great Issues Scholar. In high school, she started her school's HOSA team and was a Policy/Congressional debater and judge. She enjoys watching films, writing, and talking to people. She looks forward to working with you guys!

Please reach out to any of us if you have any questions or concerns, we are eager to see the direction that this joint-crisis committee will take over the course of this weekend. We will do our best to help you understand parliamentary procedure and to ensure that the views of all delegates are heard and respected.

Committee Overview

This committee begins when President Donald J. Trump signed into law an Executive Order to rename and reorganize the U.S. Digital Service under the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), with the purpose of modernizing information technology, maximizing productivity, and cutting excess regulations and spending within the federal government¹. Under the leadership of Elon Musk and Amy Gleason, DOGE has been granted sweeping authority to cut, reorganize, and fundamentally reshape federal agencies. As members of this newly created body, you operate in a legal and constitutional gray area, facing profound questions about DOGE's statutory authority, oversight mechanisms, accountability structures, and long-term institutional sustainability².

Employees of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) find yourselves defending an institution under existential threat. Your agency now faces dismantling by executive fiat³. You must navigate the constitutional protections that theoretically shield congressionally established agencies while confronting the political reality of an administration determined to eliminate or radically restructure your organization. On the other side, workers and supporters of DOGE's efforts are working to eliminate waste, fraud, and abuse, while dealing with the regulations- and public opinion- that protect this agency. Can the structure for foreign aid in America be saved, or will our soft power efforts abroad crumble? Your decisions will determine not only whether USAID survives but also what precedent is set for congressional authority over agency creation and appropriations.

The delegates will represent real people, and it is necessary to be respectful of that. We are attempting to be accurate to the relationships between the media, Congress, State, DOGE, and USAID through information available online. No non-public information has been used in this

¹ The White House. "Establishing and Implementing the President's "Department of Government Efficiency" – the White House." The White House, 21 Jan. 2025, www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/establishing-and-implementing-the-presidents-department-of-government-efficiency/.

² "Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) Executive Order: Early Implementation." Congress.gov, 2025, www.congress.gov/crs-product/IN12493.

³ News, PBS. "USAID Website Goes Dark amid Trump Administration's Freeze on Foreign Aid Worldwide." PBS News, Feb. 2025, www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/usaids-website-goes-dark-amid-trump-administrations-freeze-on-foreign-aid-worldwide.

research. As such, some personal roles, facts, and timelines are dramatized, and they are not representative of the American Government's opinions, policies, personnel, and actions.

The decisions made in both committees will affect hundreds of millions of people worldwide who depend on American assistance. It is up to you to determine if the United States maintains the development infrastructure built over six decades, establishes precedents for the separation of powers between executive and legislative branches, and fundamentally reshapes America's role in addressing global challenges.

Historical Context

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has served as the principal instrument of American development and humanitarian diplomacy since President John F. Kennedy established it through executive order on November 3, 1961, consolidating various foreign assistance programs scattered across multiple agencies into a unified civilian entity. Throughout its six decades of operation, USAID has administered hundreds of billions of dollars in assistance and recovery programs across more than 100 countries, implementing initiatives designed to reduce global poverty, respond to humanitarian crises, strengthen democratic institutions, improve public health outcomes, enhance food security, and promote long-term economic stability in regions critical to American strategic interests. USAID operates through a complex network of partnerships with host country governments, non-governmental organizations, private contractors, multilateral institutions, and local community groups, funding and coordinating thousands of development projects ranging from maternal health programs in Sub-Saharan Africa to democracy promotion efforts in Eastern Europe to disaster relief operations in Southeast Asia. The agency employed approximately 10,000 direct-hire personnel, supplemented by thousands of Foreign Service Nationals and contractors implementing programs in the field.

In FY2024, USAID managed appropriations exceeding \$35 billion, representing more than one-third of all funds allocated in the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs budget. The top ten recipients of USAID-managed funds in FY2023 were, in descending order, Ukraine (\$6.1 billion), the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Jordan, Ethiopia, the West Bank and Gaza, Sudan, Nigeria, Yemen, Afghanistan and South Sudan⁴.

USAID's portfolio reflects the evolution of American foreign policy priorities over more than half a century. During the Cold War, the agency functioned primarily as a tool of containment, channeling development assistance to countries vulnerable to communist influence while simultaneously promoting market economies and liberal democratic governance structures⁵.

⁴ Neufeld, Dorothy. "The Top 10 Countries Receiving U.S. Foreign Aid." Visual Capitalist, 7 Mar. 2025, www.visualcapitalist.com/top-10-countries-receiving-u-s-foreign-aid/.

⁵ Natsios, Andrew. "Foreign Aid in an Era of Great Power Competition." National Defense University Press, 11 June 2020,

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, USAID expanded its mandate to address emerging transnational challenges including HIV/AIDS, climate change, migration flows, and violent extremism, with programs increasingly focused on building institutional capacity, strengthening civil society, and promoting good governance rather than simply transferring resources⁶.

In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, the agency became increasingly integrated with counterterrorism and stabilization operations, working alongside the Department of Defense in conflict zones throughout the Middle East and Central Asia⁷. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan saw USAID's budget balloon as the agency took on responsibility for massive reconstruction efforts, operating in active combat zones and coordinating with military commanders on stabilization priorities⁸. More recently, USAID has positioned itself as a counterweight to Chinese development finance through the Belt and Road Initiative, offering what it characterizes as transparent, sustainable alternatives to Beijing's infrastructure investments in the developing world, particularly in regions where Chinese lending has raised concerns about debt sustainability and strategic influence⁹.

Currently, USAID manages emergency humanitarian responses through its Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, which has responded to earthquakes in Haiti and Nepal, typhoons in the Philippines, and ongoing conflicts in Syria, Yemen, and Ukraine¹⁰. Its global health programs have distributed antiretroviral drugs to millions of people living with HIV/AIDS through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), funded vaccination campaigns that have driven polio to the brink of eradication, and supported maternal and child health initiatives that

ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/2217683/foreign-aid-in-an-era-of-great-power-competition/.

⁶ "Technical Difficulties." State.gov, 2024,

www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/FY-2024-CBJ-FINAL_3.10.23-9AM.pdf.

⁷ OPERATION ENDURING SENTINEL OPERATION ENDURING SENTINEL. 2023.

https://oig.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/2024-03/OES_Q1_Final_Report_508_0.pdf

⁸ Bilmes, Linda. "The Ghost Budget: How U.S. War Spending Went Rogue, Wasted Billions, and How to Fix It."

Harvard Kennedy School, 1 Apr. 2024,

www.hks.harvard.edu/faculty-research/policycast/ghost-budget-how-us-war-spending-went-rogue-wasted-billions-and-how-fix-it.

⁹ Pacheco, Jerry. "Pacheco: As USAID Fades, China's Belt and Road Initiative Rises." Albuquerque Journal, 17 Aug. 2025, www.abqjournal.com/business/article_a33e91f4-757f-4367-9551-c59186d0e333.html. Accessed 7 Nov. 2025.

¹⁰ Mission, U.S. "Raising the Bar for ASEAN Disaster Response." U.S. Mission to ASEAN, 31 Jan. 2024, asean.usmission.gov/raising-the-bar-for-asean-disaster-response/.

have dramatically reduced mortality rates in target countries¹¹. Through its Feed the Future initiative, launched in 2010, USAID has invested in agricultural development programs across 20 countries, working to address the root causes of hunger and malnutrition while building resilience against climate shocks.¹²

Yet, USAID has long faced criticism from multiple directions across the ideological spectrum. Fiscal conservatives have consistently challenged the agency's cost-effectiveness, pointing to projects that have failed to achieve stated objectives despite consuming substantial resources, overhead costs that consume significant portions of program budgets before assistance reaches intended beneficiaries, and accountability mechanisms too weak to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse¹³. The Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction documented numerous examples of failed USAID programs in that country, including a \$150 million initiative to build modern farming facilities that local farmers could not operate or maintain, a \$335 million energy infrastructure project that produced virtually no usable electricity, and stabilization programs in insecure provinces that showed no measurable impact on reducing violence or building government legitimacy¹⁴. A Center for Global Development analysis of President Trump's criticisms identified several genuinely problematic USAID projects, including questionable spending on luxury hotels for conferences, partnerships with controversial organizations, and programs in countries with documented human rights abuses, lending some credibility to conservative complaints about wasteful spending¹⁵.

Critics also highlight fundamental measurement challenges inherent in development work, arguing that USAID's self-reported success metrics often rely on easily manipulated indicators

¹¹ U.S. Department of State. "The United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief - United States Department of State." United States Department of State, 2019, www.state.gov/pepfar/.

¹² "U.S. Government's Feed the Future Initiative Helps Countries Cope with Rising Food Prices." U.S. Department of State, 2017, 2009-2017, state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/03/157626.htm. Accessed 7 Nov. 2025.

¹³ Schmitz, Matthew. "Opinion | This Is Why Conservatives Turned against Foreign Aid." The New York Times, 7 Apr. 2025, www.nytimes.com/2025/04/07/opinion/usaaid-foreign-aid-gay-trans.html.

¹⁴ SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONSTRUCTION ARLINGTON VA. Quarterly Report to the United States Congress, July 30, 2013, apps.dtic.mil/sti/html/trecms/AD1147492/index.html. Accessed 9 Jan. 2026.

¹⁵ "The Trump Administration and the International Financial Institutions: The Good, the Bad, and the Cynical." Center for Global Development, 2025, www.cgdev.org/blog/trump-administration-and-international-financial-institutions-good-bad-and-cynical.

such as the number of people trained or meetings held rather than demonstrable improvements in living standards, governance quality, or economic productivity.

Meanwhile, DOGE represents an unprecedented experiment in executive branch reorganization and administrative reduction. The entity emerged through President Trump's executive order on January 20, 2025, titled "Establishing and Implementing the President's Department of Government Efficiency," which renamed and restructured the U.S. Digital Service, a small technology unit established during the Obama administration to improve government digital infrastructure¹⁶. This reorganization occurred through executive action rather than legislation, bypassing the normal congressional authorization and appropriations process while raising fundamental questions about separation of powers and the constitutional limits of executive authority.

DOGE operates as "a temporary organization within the Executive Office of the President" tasked with providing "advice and recommendations to the President on government efficiency and reform." However, the practical authority DOGE has assumed extends far beyond advisory functions. The House Budget Committee described DOGE as leading "a government-wide effort to modernize Federal information technology, increase government efficiency and effectiveness, and eliminate waste" with the stated goal of saving \$2 trillion from the federal budget¹⁷. The president appointed Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy (later replaced by Amy Gleason) to lead DOGE, individuals who have no government experience but command vast private sector resources and reputations for disrupting established industries¹⁸.

DOGE's expansive claim of power has provoked immediate legal challenges and constitutional objections. Multiple lawsuits have been filed challenging DOGE's structure and authority, with Democracy Docket explaining that legal challenges focus on violations of the Federal Advisory

¹⁶ "Establishing and Implementing the President's "Department of Government Efficiency" – the White House." The White House, 21 Jan. 2025, www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/establishing-and-implementing-the-presidents-department-of-government-efficiency/.

¹⁷ "President Trump Launches Government Modernization Effort Through DOGE." House Budget Committee, 2025, budget.house.gov/press-release/president-trump-launches-government-modernization-effort-through-doge.

¹⁸ "How Elon Musk Built His DOGE Operation: Timeline and Key Takeaways." The New York Times, 28 Feb. 2025, www.nytimes.com/2025/02/28/us/politics/musk-doge-timeline-takeaways.html.

Committee Act (which requires transparency and balanced membership for advisory bodies), the Antideficiency Act (which prohibits agencies from accepting voluntary services), and constitutional separation of powers principles¹⁹. In February 2025, a federal judge questioned the constitutionality of DOGE's operations, expressing skepticism about whether the executive branch could create an entity wielding such authority without congressional authorization²⁰. The Constitution Center hosted a detailed legal analysis examining whether "DOGE is breaking the law," with constitutional scholars expressing grave concerns about the precedent being set for executive power²¹.

The organization operates with minimal transparency despite FACA requirements. While *The New York Times* managed to identify many DOGE employees through investigative reporting, publishing an interactive database of DOGE staff in February 2025, the organization has resisted formal disclosure of its membership, decision-making processes, or the criteria it uses to evaluate agencies and programs for elimination²². Critics charge that DOGE functions as an unaccountable shadow government, making consequential policy decisions without the expertise, deliberation, or democratic legitimacy that should accompany such fundamental changes to how government operates. Career civil servants and their unions have raised alarms about DOGE representatives conducting "efficiency reviews" that appear designed to justify predetermined conclusions about workforce reductions rather than genuinely assess agency operations²³.

The collision between DOGE and USAID was perhaps inevitable, bringing into stark relief fundamental questions about America's role in the world, the proper scope of federal government activities, the balance between fiscal restraint and moral obligation, and the process by which

¹⁹ "The Legal Challenges to Elon Musk's DOGE, Explained." Democracy Docket, 7 Feb. 2025, www.democracydocket.com/analysis/the-legal-challenges-to-elon-musks-doge-explained/.

²⁰ Stratford, Michael. "Judge Questions Constitutionality of DOGE, Musk's Role - POLITICO." POLITICO, Politico, 24 Feb. 2025, www.politico.com/news/2025/02/24/judge-questions-constitutionality-doge-elon-musk-00205866.

²¹ "Is DOGE Breaking the Law? 2025. constitutioncenter.org/media/files/Is-DOGE-Breaking-the-Law-WTP-transcript.pdf.

²² Goldmacher, Shane, et al. "Who Works for Elon Musk's DOGE? We Identified Employees of the Secretive Department." The New York Times, 27 Feb. 2025, www.nytimes.com/interactive/2025/02/27/us/politics/doge-staff-list.html.

²³ "DOGE Agency Deployments Raise Ethical and Influence Concerns - Government Executive." Govexec.com, 2025, www.govexec.com/management/2025/01/doge-agency-deployments-raise-ethical-and-influence-concerns/402204/.

democracies should make consequential policy choices. For DOGE, USAID represents nearly everything it opposes: an agency spending tens of billions of dollars on overseas programs whose benefits to American taxpayers remain difficult to quantify, complex bureaucratic structures that resist measurement and accountability, and a mission rooted in international cooperation and humanitarian concern rather than narrow calculations of national interest. For USAID's defenders, the agency embodies American values and strategic wisdom, advancing national security through development rather than military force, building goodwill and partnerships that pay dividends across decades, and meeting moral obligations that distinguish the United States from authoritarian competitors unconcerned with human suffering beyond their borders.

Current Situation

The Dissolution of the U.S. Agency for International Development

DOGE

As part of its mandate to eliminate inefficiency, redundancy, and wasteful government expenditures, DOGE has identified US foreign aid as a top source of needless government spending. Within mere hours of being sworn into office, President Trump signed Executive Order 14169, directing government officials to “immediately pause new obligations and disbursements of development assistance funds” for a 90-day review²⁴. Now, the future of US foreign aid programs, specifically USAID, hangs in the balance. As employees and affiliates of DOGE, you have the power to shape this future in accordance with Trump’s “America First” policy framework. But just how far will you go? While debating the complete dissolution vs. partial destruction of this pillar of US foreign aid, you must weigh the moral responsibility of supporting the humanitarian communities that depend on USAID with your aim to carry out DOGE’s mission to resolve the US from its foreign financial commitments while still allowing it to maintain its status as a leading international power, all while operating within constitutional boundaries²⁵²⁶.

USAID

Under the direction of the Trump Administration, USAID was identified as the government agency with the most wasteful spending. Specifically, Order 14169 directs government officials to “immediately pause new obligations and disbursements of development assistance funds” for a 90-day review. This mainly includes funds directed towards humanitarian aid and regional security concerns. It goes without saying that the future of US foreign aid programs hangs in the balance. While DOGE employees view USAID as an agency of mismanaged funds, it is the job of this committee to defend your alternate viewpoint. As allies and stakeholders of USAID, it is your responsibility to respond to DOGE’s approach and attempt to find a middle ground if

²⁴ Gill, Cory R., and Emily M. McCabe. “Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs: FY2025 Budget and Appropriations | Congress.Gov | Library of Congress.” Congress.Gov, www.congress.gov/crs-product/R48231. Accessed 9 Jan. 2026.

²⁵ Bidgood, Jess. “Making Sense of DOGE’s Cuts.” New York Times, 17 Mar. 2025, www.nytimes.com/2025/03/17/us/politics/making-sense-of-doges-cuts.html.

²⁶ Roy, Diana. “What Is USAID and Why Is It at Risk?” Council on Foreign Relations, Council on Foreign Relations, 7 Feb. 2025, www.cfr.org/article/what-usaid-and-why-it-risk.

necessary. While debating the details of your response, you must consider the impact that humanitarian aid has on foreign relations and the potential vacuum created by freezing it. If this committee succeeds in conveying the importance of. What happens to USAID in these next 90 days rests entirely in your hands.

The Legality of DOGE's Approach to Decimation

DOGE

Since its conception, opponents of Musk and the Trump administration have contested that DOGE's existence and approach to decimation are inherently unconstitutional. A president cannot create a federal agency by executive order — only Congress can establish new agencies. Trump justifies his actions, claiming that DOGE is a rebrand of the existing United States Digital Service, created under the Obama administration. Currently, DOGE's existence is the subject of a trio of lawsuits alleging that it shouldn't be considered a federal agency at all, but rather an advisory committee.²⁷ In the meantime, DOGE continues to slash US foreign involvement. In the process of dismantling the US foreign aid program, critics claim that DOGE has accessed databases for which they have not retained proper clearance, while simultaneously refusing to make their own records public. As employees of DOGE, you're on a mission: improve the effectiveness of the government through data-driven analysis. However, it is up to you to ensure that, facing allegations, that analysis is protected under the Constitution.

USAID

From its creation through an executive order, DOGE has been the subject of heated discussions surrounding its ambiguous legality. Traditionally, the “power of the purse” is reserved for Congress exclusively, but DOGE seems to invoke this power in Order 14169. Additionally, questions have been raised regarding the security clearances of special government employees who manage sensitive information at DOGE. As allies and stakeholders of USAID, you are tasked with weighing the best approach to respond to DOGE's approach to decimation. Should the committee focus on the legality of DOGE as an agency or concentrate on their approach to withholding funds? While debating DOGE's legality, you must consider the Congressional

²⁷ Cohen, Matt. “The Legal Challenges to Elon Musk's Doge, Explained.” Democracy Docket, 20 Feb. 2025, www.democracymarket.com/analysis/the-legal-challenges-to-elon-musks-doge-explained/.

implications of losing budgeting leverage. Given the nature of the committee, you must weigh the appropriate channels in which to raise these legal concerns, e.g., lawsuits or the Supreme Court.

USAID Questions to Consider

1. What strategies will you employ to save USAID?
2. If funding is disrupted, what contingency plans could maintain critical operations? What are the risks and benefits of alternative funding models?
3. What is the best way to approach the discussion surrounding the legality of DOGE's decimation of USAID? Lawsuits? Supreme Court decisions? Past precedent?
4. Are there ways USAID could collaborate with DOGE or the Trump Administration to meet shared goals without compromising its mission?
5. How should USAID respond if DOGE operatives seek access to sensitive information about programs, partners, or personnel?
6. How can USAID leverage its relationships with Congress, allied nations, NGOs, and international organizations?
7. What obligations does USAID have to implementing partners, contractors, and foreign governments under existing agreements? What are the consequences of breaching these commitments?
8. Could USAID survive an absorption into the State Department, or is that an unacceptable outcome?

DOGE Questions to Consider

1. What aspects of government spending prove to be the most wasteful? Is grossly cutting spending the most effective, or should you be more careful with what's cut?
2. Could DOGE harm U.S. national interests or "soft support" by cutting development programs that support stability abroad?
3. How will you handle the controversy surrounding the legality of DOGE?
4. What is the legal basis for DOGE's authority? Should DOGE have rule-making power, or only advisory/oversight authority?

5. Under what conditions might preserving reformed USAID operations better serve your mandate than complete elimination?
6. What limits, if any, should constrain efforts to restructure or eliminate federal agencies? How do you balance efficiency mandates against other considerations?
7. What information and access do you need to conduct thorough efficiency reviews? If agencies resist providing data or cooperation, what methods are justified to obtain necessary information?
8. If your actions trigger congressional pushback, judicial review, or resistance from federal employees, what is your strategy to maintain momentum while managing political and legal opposition?
9. How transparent should DOGE's operation be? What information should be public versus protected? How do you propose balancing accountability against operation flexibility?

USAID Committee

[Marco Rubio](#) is the Secretary of State and National Security Advisor of the United States. He previously served as a Senator from Florida from 2011 to 2025, known for his expertise and strong opinions on foreign affairs. When USAID was dismantled in January 2025, Rubio was serving as the last acting USAID administrator. His career has spanned all realms of policy, from immigration and foreign diplomacy to federal budgeting and healthcare. Formerly a supporter of USAID, Rubio led its transfer to the State Department, arguing that it was beyond reform. Rubio's extensive influence in the federal government makes him a leading figure and intermediary between USAID and DOGE.

[Jason Gray](#) served as Acting Director of USAID during the release of Executive Order 14169, and was the Chief Information Officer from 2022 to 2025. His work with USAID focused on managing its over \$340 million IT portfolio and ensuring secure and effective digital operations for the over 100 countries USAID serves. Within a week following President Trump's second inauguration, he sent an email to all USAID staff informing them that an unspecified number of USAID employees were placed on "administrative leave with full pay and benefits until further notice." As Acting Director, he has the power to pause USAID employee operations to comply with DOGE's demands, but must navigate the power and opinions of his colleagues at USAID..

[Nicholas Gottlieb](#) served as USAID Director of Employee and Labor Relations from February 2019 until the Trump administration effectively dissolved the agency in January 2025. His career has focused on representing, training, and maintaining accountability among USAID employees worldwide. On January 30th, he rescinded an order to place USAID staff on leave that Acting Director Jason Gray had emailed out three days prior, only to be terminated. As the primary representative of USAID employees, Gottlieb has the power to determine whether USAID internally consolidates or opposes DOGE's demands.

[Samantha Power](#), a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, served as USAID Administrator from 2021 until the Trump administration's return to power in January 2025. Her career has focused on human rights, genocide prevention, and multilateral diplomacy, bringing moral clarity to debates over America's humanitarian obligations. As Administrator, Power led USAID's response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, coordinating billions in emergency assistance while building coalitions with European allies and international organizations. Her public profile and credibility make her a powerful voice defending development assistance against accusations of waste and strategic irrelevance, though her association with Democratic foreign policy may limit her influence with the current administration.

[Amir Ali](#) is a United States district judge of the United States District Court of the District of Columbia. On February 13th, he paused the federal order to put USAID employees on paid leave in *Department of State v. AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition* (2025). Two weeks later, on February 27th, Bill H.Res.174 - "Impeaching Amir Hatem Mahdy Ali, a judge of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia, for high crimes and misdemeanors" was introduced into the House of Representatives, and his decision was overridden by Chief Justice John Roberts the following day. Ali is uniquely positioned to oppose attempts to shut down USAID without due process, but his position, including his job status and jurisdiction, is threatened by the Supreme Court and the legislative branch.

[Atul Gawande](#) served as Assistant Administrator for Global Health from January 2022 to January 2025, overseeing USAID's health portfolio including PEPFAR, maternal and child health programs, and pandemic preparedness initiatives. His medical expertise prepares him to explain the humanitarian consequences of disrupting global health programs, particularly regarding HIV treatment disruptions affecting millions of patients. Gawande's data-driven approach to health systems strengthening provides evidence countering accusations that USAID health programs waste resources without achieving measurable results.

[Christopher Milligan](#) works as Agency Counselor, USAID's chief legal officer. He provides legal guidance on the agency's statutory authorities, congressional mandates, and international obligations. His expertise on the Foreign Assistance Act and the legal framework governing USAID operations makes him essential to arguments that the executive branch cannot unilaterally dismantle a congressionally established agency.

[Reginald W. Mitchell](#), USAID's Chief Financial Officer, managed the agency's budget, ensured compliance with appropriations law, and oversaw financial reporting to Congress and oversight bodies. His technical expertise on how appropriated funds are obligated, disbursed, and accounted for proves critical to challenging the administration's funding freeze. Mitchell's understanding of the Antideficiency Act, which not only prohibits agencies from spending money not appropriated by Congress, but also from refusing to spend appropriated funds, provides legal ammunition against executive impoundment of USAID's budget.

[Paul Martin](#) served as the USAID Inspector General, until his removal in February of 2025. He has decades of experience in this accountability focused position as well as an essential role in preventing waste, fraud, and abuse. He was appointed to be the USAID Inspector General from 2024 to February 2025. Paul was terminated from his position just one day after releasing an article detailing how nearly \$500 million dollars of food assistance was at risk of diversion or spoilage in response to Executive Order 14169 suspending all USAID programs.

[Pete Marocco](#) was appointed by the Trump Administration to serve as the Head of Foreign Aid at the State Department, eventually taking over the remnants of USAID when they merged with the State Department. He focused on reviewing and canceling foreign aid projects, until his sudden departure to the Department of War. He is a clear ideological leader of this project, and he fully believes in the necessity of maximizing efficiency in America's foreign aid projects.

[Julie Koenen](#) is the USAID Mission Director for Ukraine. She handles on the ground implementation of humanitarian aid and development efforts. Ukraine's strategic importance and the evolving situation in that country will create a variety of goals and necessities of aid provision and implementation in Ukraine. Given the high amount of aid Ukraine receives during this conflict, she will be an effective advocate for how American aid supports this warstruck country.

[Oksana Markarova](#) served as the Ukrainian Ambassador to the United States from 2021 to September 2025. Prior to serving as Ambassador, she served as the Ukrainian Minister of Finance and prioritized attracting American companies to Ukraine and cooperating with President Biden and American officials. She was noted as a charismatic and successful ambassador, despite the increased pressure from the American right calling for her termination. As representative of the largest recipient nation of USAID funding, Markarova speaks for the millions of lives affected by USAID's shutdown, and her goal will be to ensure that USAID's abolishment does not jeopardize the status and safety of Ukrainians.

[John Dunlop](#), the USAID Mission Director for Democratic Republic of Congo, manages programs addressing humanitarian crises, public health challenges, and governance issues in one of USAID's top ten aid recipients. The DRC's strategic importance due to its mineral wealth, particularly cobalt and rare earth elements, provides economic arguments for continued engagement beyond purely humanitarian justifications. Dunlop's experience implementing programs in extremely difficult conditions grants him credibility and influence to speak for the benefits of development work.

[Scott Hocklander](#) is the USAID Mission Director for Ethiopia, where he works to implement aid provision and manage on the ground relationships. Ethiopia is a crucial American partner in global health specifically, and as such, Hocklander has the authority to speak to the necessity of many vaccination, malaria, and family planning programs that face cutting by DOGE.

[Nicholas Enrich](#) is the Acting Assistant Administrator for Global Health, meaning that he oversees a wide variety of vaccine, disease prevention, family planning, and overall health programs. These development goals were a major target of DOGE, and as such, Enrich fought back by leaking a memo that demonstrated the scale of potential illness and death without USAID's global health support. He is a critical figure in the public fight against the impacts of DOGE.

[Isobel Coleman](#) is responsible for the administration of aid by USAID. She has decades of experience in implementing development work globally, and has close allies in the UN and non-governmental organizations focused on aid. Her work is at jeopardy with the rise of DOGE, but she may have the experience and connections to fight back in an effective and influential manner.

[Paloma Adams-Allen](#) runs USAID's buying and compliance rules and can block new purchases through her management of spending. However, if she has no funding, her job becomes a lot harder. Her main role focuses on compliance and accountability, especially in contracting, which is a major DOGE target. She could represent a key barrier to a DOGE takeover or an easily automated position to be replaced.

[Sarah Charles](#), a Dartmouth Alum, directs humanitarian global food responses for USAID. She works closely with UN agencies and NGOs to prevent famines around the world. She has years of experience, as well as national security credentials, which in a time where crises necessitating food aid all around the world, are very necessary. Moving forward, she could be valuable in helping create a new framework for food aid delivery or defending the current system.

[Chris Burns](#) sets USAID's tech rules for digital payments and manages digital systems. Given DOGE's former role as the White House Digital Service, Burns could have an important role to play in countering their influence and preventing the infiltration of DOGE into USAID's systems and tech policy. He also has experience in supporting digital freedom and access around the world as a key facet of development.

[Brian Mast](#) became Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee in January 2025. Days before Trump's inauguration, he placed hundreds of millions in State Department and USAID spending on hold, calling programs like climate change studies in the Middle East and LGBTQ awareness in Zimbabwe wasteful. His unexpected rise to chair—considered a “dark horse” candidate—signals a dramatic Congressional shift toward Trump-aligned foreign policy. Representative Mast's military background gives him credibility on national security and his January 9th funding freeze demonstrated his priority of cutting what he views as bloated aid programs. As Chairman, Mast has oversight power over the State Department and USAID, allowing him to demand briefings, hold investigative hearings requiring officials to testify, and manage Congressionally mandated funding levels.

[Gregory Meeks](#) serves as the Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. When reports emerged that emergency food aid would spoil rather than be distributed, Meeks sent blistering letters to Secretary Rubio demanding accountability for “government waste and an affront to the generosity of the American people.” His August 2025 investigation revealed nearly \$1 million in taxpayer funds wasted incinerating expired food commodities. Representative Meeks has influence over the State Department and USAID due to his oversight powers, but since the Democrats are in the House minority, he does not have as much formal power as Chairman Mast. He can hold hearings, request briefings, send letters, and vote on funding and personnel confirmations, but cannot override the majority's dismantling of USAID- and there's no guarantee the administration will comply with his demands.

[Michael Crowley](#) is a New York Times State Department Correspondent. Covering U.S. foreign policy for the Times, Crowley has access to State Department officials and documents leaked by frustrated career diplomats. His reporting shapes elite opinion in Washington and provides a permanent record of USAID's final days. But conservative critics accuse the Times of bias, as DOGE supporters point to government grants to the Times as proof of its status as a "propaganda arm." Crowley can expose DOGE's chaos and legal violations, yet his institution faces accusations that compromise his credibility.

[Michelle Nunn](#) leads CARE, which received massive USAID funding for work in over 100 countries with 7,000 staff members. When Trump froze aid, CARE faced an existential crisis of laying off staff, turning away patients, and halting operations. Nunn testified before Congress, coordinated with other NGO leaders, and spoke at rallies defending foreign aid. Nunn can argue that eliminating USAID doesn't just hurt people abroad, it destroys American NGOs employing thousands.

[Paul Guaglianone](#) is the Senior Bureau Official for the Bureau of Legislative Affairs at the U.S. Department of State. He is responsible for managing relations between the State Department and Congress, including sharing legally required notifications, managing personnel confirmations, and briefing the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and House Foreign Affairs Committee. He is responsible for responding to letters from Congress Members. He is a political appointee.

[Nicholas Kristof](#) is an opinion writer for the New York Times. During the time of this crisis, he wrote an opinion article tallying the potential losses from USAID. This had a major impact on the conversation around USAID and DOGE, and his research is deeply influential. As an investigative reporter with a large platform, he has the power to make the public understand the gravity of this issue.

[David Miliband](#) is the President and CEO of the International Rescue Committee, as well as the former UK Foreign Secretary. He leads one of the largest non-governmental organizations focused on development around the world and has major influence in the aid space. During this crisis, he called for continuity and funding to support populations around the world reliant on aid. IRC received around \$250 million annually to support relief programs and refugee support work in over thirty countries.

DOGE Committee

[Edward Coristine](#) is a 19-year-old computer programmer and former engineering student at Northeastern. He is the youngest employee of DOGE, and one of the most infamous. In his role within the Office of Personnel Management, he has wide-range access to federal information systems. He is also the founder of numerous startups, including an artificial intelligence bot within Discord for the Russian market, and he idolizes Elon Musk. He is also known to have briefly worked at the State Department. His influence and activity as a chaos agent is far reaching, but little is known about his definitive impacts.

[Leila Nasser](#) is DOGE's primary public relations liaison. She manages media relations, responds to criticism, and shapes public narratives about the department's activities. Her role entails defending DOGE's legal authority against constitutional challenges, explaining workforce reductions and program eliminations to skeptical audiences, and maintaining public support for aggressive efficiency measures. Nasser has the power to issue press releases, advocate for DOGE in the public eye, and communicate with journalists.

[Russell Vought](#) serves as Director of the Office of Management and Budget, reprising a role he previously held during Trump's first administration. Vought is responsible for preparing the president's budget and overseeing federal spending. He has long advocated for dramatic reductions in domestic and foreign spending, viewing much of the federal government as unnecessary. As OMB Director, he possesses statutory authority over the budgets of government agencies and can implement spending freezes, reprogram appropriated funds, and refuse to release congressionally allocated money through impoundment. His ideological commitment to shrinking government, powerful position, and political influence makes him a crucial leader in efforts to dismantle USAID.

[Jared Moskowitz](#) is the Congressman for Florida's 23rd district, and he was notably the first Democrat to join the DOGE Caucus in Congress. He is known for prioritizing bipartisanship, often voting with Republicans and reaching across the aisle. He serves on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, granting him some oversight based influence over this issue, but his core power comes from his role in the DOGE Caucus and unique position as a House Democrat who is vocally opposed to waste, fraud, and abuse.

[Steve Davis](#) is the head of operations at DOGE, where he is tasked with managing internal logistics, recruitment, and financial efficiency. Davis is one of Elon Musk's most trusted advisors, with many calling him Musk's right hand man. Before joining DOGE, he was president of the Boring Company, one of Musk's companies, and was subject to controversy around the companies' achievements, or lack thereof. He has advocated for operational efficiency and fiscal restraint, favoring automation and downsizing and remains very committed to Musk's vision of decentralized innovation. He played a major role in sending out the mass resignation letter in January 2025.

[Amy Gleason](#), a management consultant with corporate restructuring experience, replaced Vivek Ramaswamy as co-leader of DOGE in February 2025. As Administrator, Gleason coordinates DOGE's reviews across federal agencies, manages relationships with cabinet secretaries, and oversees the team of consultants and engineers conducting efficiency assessments. Her background in corporate downsizing makes her particularly focused on workforce reductions and operational streamlining.

[Chris Young](#) served as the top political advisor for Elon Musk while simultaneously working for DOGE, particularly helping to dismantle the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, leading to many questioning the legality of his work for DOGE. Musk hired Young to directly oversee his political spending. Some say that his involvement in Musk's political action committee exhibits a conflict of interest, as his involvement in DOGE potentially benefits his private life. In his work for Musk, he oversaw controversies such as the random cash giveaways on the campaign trail. He was one of the first officials given access to sensitive bank records in the early days of DOGE.

[Joe Gebbia](#) is the co-founder and design innovator of AirBnB. Joe Gebbia joined DOGE in February as a volunteer. His main job is to cut two trillion dollars from the federal budget through digitizing the retirement process for federal workers. He focuses on eliminating inefficiencies within outdated systems. Within DOGE, he holds authority over digital infrastructure and automation plans. He reports directly to Steve Davis. He has a strong belief that technology can be used as a tool to make government systems more intuitive and save money. Being a billionaire working to cut spending may enhance or harm his credibility.

[Aram Moghaddassi](#) is a software engineer working as the Social Security Administration's head IT official for DOGE. He previously worked for the Labor Department, as well as X and Neuralink. His previous roles in the Department of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Small Business Administration gave him access to sensitive information such as labor visas, unemployment insurance, Medicare/Medicaid, loans, and more. He oversees the digital infrastructure and ensures that internal systems are streamlined, automated, and tightly controlled. He aims to use IT and data systems to absorb/replace parts of USAID's functions.

[Anthony Armstrong](#) is a top investment banker at Morgan Stanley who was hired by Elon Musk to advise him on his purchase of Twitter. Musk again tapped him to be a senior advisor at DOGE Office of Personnel Management. In this post, he has led mass layoffs in the federal government, arguing that too many people were performing the same job. He is an extremely close ally of Musk, and shares his ideological vision.

[Brad Smith](#) is a DOGE executive, and Steve Davis' right-hand man. Previously, Smith operated an investment firm, and has founded and sold multiple healthcare companies for billions of dollars. During Trump's first Administration, Smith served as Director of the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation. Now, Smith brings his acute knowledge of the healthcare system to his work at DOGE, where he is responsible for implementing cuts to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Smith essentially functioned as the chief of staff during DOGE's early days and exerts far greater influence within the organization than his formal position lets on.

[Tyler Hassen](#) is a senior leader at DOGE, whose background as a Texas-based oil baron has made him the longtime opponent of many prominent environmental activists. At DOGE, he retains the power to perform a complete overhaul and reorganization of the Department of Interior, which manages 500 million acres of public lands and oversees numerous agencies including the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service.

[Tom Krause](#) is a Silicon Valley CEO of Cloud Software Group. At DOGE, he is the Fiscal Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, where he manages the Bureau of Fiscal Service, which houses the federal government's financial infrastructure. His role grants him access to the Treasury Department's payment systems, also known as the nation's "checkbook."

[John Roberts](#), the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, has enormous power to hold the federal government accountable and weigh in on the legal dilemmas of DOGE's actions. He can serve to empower or constrain their vision, depending on his ruling- and if he can get a majority of his fellow Justices to follow him. He has shown a willingness to block some DOGE policies, but also allowed others. Chief Justice Roberts is the final word on constitutionality.

[Katrine Trampe](#) is the DOGE Liaison to the Department of the Interior. She is another leader in the work of reviewing and canceling grants and contracts. Besides this position, her main power comes from the high level administrative access to payroll systems for hundreds of thousands of federal workers.

[Katie Miller](#) was one of the first people hired for the DOGE team, and she currently serves as a senior advisor to DOGE. She is known both for her communications and media skills and her ideological commitment to DOGE's mission. Along with DOGE's spokesperson, she handles major public relations moves. She is also the wife of Stephen Miller, a member of the inner circle at the White House, granting her influence.

[Gavin Kliger](#) is a software engineer at DOGE with no prior government experience. He has worked on a variety of different efforts around DOGE, but is most well known for playing a major role in the closing of USAID. He sent a staffwide email to USAID workers located in the Washington, D.C. headquarters telling them not to come to work the same day that two DOGE employees attempted to gain access to a secure area of the USAID office in order to get classified material.

[Jeremy Lewin](#) occupies dual roles as USAID Deputy Administrator and Under Secretary of State for Foreign Assistance, Humanitarian Affairs, and Religious Freedom. He was fundamental in the closing of USAID, but is now responsible for its continuation. He is also now in charge of the duties of the Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, which were dissolved into the Undersecretary of Foreign Assistance role in the reorganization of the Department.

[Clayton Cromer](#) is a former corporate lawyer and a key policy person in the DOGE team that dismantled USAID. Using his legal expertise, he managed core parts of the transfer of the remaining functional aspects of USAID to the U.S. Department of State. He also worked closely with the Office of Personnel Management to handle overseas USAID staff return and plan firings.

[Washington Post Reporting](#). During the inauguration and immediate release of executive orders, the Washington Post closely followed the Trump Administration's actions. Based in Washington D.C., the newspaper has approximately 2.5 million subscribers across the nation. As a powerful and well-respected publisher, the Washington Post has the ability to influence politicians, policy analysts, and the general public alike with both their opinion and investigative pieces. A major challenge to the paper is new ownership by Jeff Bezos, which has already affected the ideological tilt of the opinion section.

[Theodore Chuang](#) is a Federal Judge for the United States District Court for the District of Maryland, nominated by President Obama in 2014. In March 2025, Judge Chuang heard the lawsuit USAID vs. DOGE in which 26 former USAID employees sued DOGE and the government for unconstitutional termination, violating the separation of powers and Appointments Clause of the Constitution. Judge Chuang ruled in favor of USAID, stating that the termination of USAID, although this led to calls for his impeachment from elected officials. Judge Chuang has the ability to determine the legality of these issues, but is vulnerable to impeachment by Congress and overruling from the Supreme Court.

[DOGE Counsel](#) represents the agency before Congress and in federal courts, and serves as DOGE's primary authority on important legal matters. The legal team is employed by DOGE, but serves as an important check on their power, with their judgements shaping the outer limits of DOGE's authority. It is this team that fights for DOGE's constitutionality in court and advises the policy planning wing of DOGE.

[Robert Garcia](#) represents California's 42nd Congressional District in Congress. He is the lead Democrat on the powerful House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. He strongly opposes DOGE's actions and has called them "extremely dangerous." He has the power to call for briefings, shape public opinion through high profile hearings, and request government documents. However, since he is not in the majority, he does not have the power to call government officials to testify, subpoena, or lead investigations.

[Brian Schatz](#) is a Democratic Senator from Hawaii. He has publicly criticized DOGE's cuts to USAID, calling them unsafe and illegal. In an attempt to force DOGE to reverse its cuts to USAID, he put in place a blanket hold in the Senate to prevent the approval of Trump's State Department personnel nominees, preventing many leadership and ambassadorial positions at State from being officially filled. He is also a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and thus has oversight of State and Congress.

[Vivek Ramaswamy](#) is a heavily influential leader in the conservative space, even after his failed run for president. He was announced before President Trump's inauguration as a co-leader of DOGE, but shortly after the official start of DOGE's work, he exited for unknown reasons and is now considering a run for Governor of Ohio. His role as a leader in DOGE will be interesting to explore, and the causes for his exit- or a potential remain- can be unpacked once the action begins in committee.

[Christopher Stanley](#) is a long-time Musk ally. He initially began at DOGE as an engineer and renowned hacker, but ended up becoming a senior advisor at the Department of Justice. Before this, he was a security engineer at SpaceX and X, formerly Twitter. On his first day of work, he welcomed pardoned January 6th insurrectionists as they were released from DC jails. As an ideologue and close supporter of Musk, he holds sway within DOGE, and now, at the DOJ.

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