



# The State of Russian Opposition in 2023

Panel Discussion: Dr. Robert Horvath, Assoc. Prof. William Partlett, Petr Kuzmin

Tuesday 21 March: 5.30pm for 6pm – 7pm AEDT Dyason House, 124 Jolimont Road, East Melbourne

The invasion of Ukraine saw an outbreak of protests in Russia and raised hopes that the Russian people might be able to stop the war. Those hopes have to date not been fulfilled. Instead, leading opposition leaders have been imprisoned or exiled.

With legitimate political opposition to Putin's rule effectively outlawed, does internal resistance to Putin's regime still matter? Who can be considered Putin's political opposition? What is the current and potential role of the leading political figures in the anti-war resistance movement?



In answering these questions, the panel will consider three main points:

1. Resistance to the Putin regime and its propaganda apparatus under the current conditions.
2. The opposition's potential role in the event of a political crisis within Putin's regime.
3. The opposition's possible contribution to the restoration of democratic institutions in the aftermath of a collapse of the Putin regime.

This discussion will set the context for [A Conversation with Alexey Navalny's Chief-of-Staff, Leonid Volkov](#) which will take place at AIIA Victoria on Tuesday 28 March 2023.



**Dr Robert Horvath** is a specialist on Russian Politics at La Trobe University. His most recent book is [Putin's Fascists: Russkii Obraz and the Politics of Managed Nationalism in Russia](#) (Routledge, 2021). It examines the relationship between the Putin regime and Russkii Obraz, a neo-nazi organization that became a major force on Russia's radical nationalist scene in 2008-10. It shows how Russkii Obraz's rise was boosted by the regime's policy of 'managed nationalism,' which mobilised radical nationalist proxies against opponents of authoritarianism. His current research preoccupations include the Putin regime's manipulation of Russian nationalism, its assault on international human rights institutions, and its intervention in Africa.



**Associate Professor William Partlett** is an Associate Professor at Melbourne Law School. He has travelled extensively in Russia and the former Soviet Union. His written work on the region includes publications in both academic journals as well as *The Conversation* and *The National Interest*. His insights draw on both his training in Russian politics, language, and history at Oxford University and Princeton University as well as his legal training at Stanford Law School. His latest book is [The Post-Soviet as Post-Colonial](#) (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2022).



**Petr Kuzmin** is a Russian Australian anti-war activist and a vocal critic of Putin's regime within the Russian-speaking community of Australia. He was one of the founders of Svoboda Alliance, a pro-democracy community organisation focused on promoting universal human rights and political freedoms in Russia and within the Russian diaspora of Australia. He is a long-time supporter of Alexei Navalny and his Anti-Corruption Foundation.

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