

Conference on Post-Putin Russia

Hosted by Dr Robert Horvath and Richard Iron CMG OBE

Tuesday 21 November 2023

10am to 4.30pm AEDT | Level 13, 356 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000

Vladimir Putin's rule over the Russian Federation will not last forever. While the decision-making processes of his regime are opaque and shrouded by rumour and disinformation, there are clear signs that his hold on power is weakening. A succession of military setbacks in Ukraine, his indictment by the International Criminal Court, and the unprecedented uprising by Wagner forces in June, all suggest that we need to start preparing for a post-Putin future.



The effects of Putin's departure will have global repercussions. The post-Putin era may bring about a new geopolitical reality in the Asia-Pacific, forcing the US, China, and Australia to rethink how they commit to the region.

AIIA Victoria invites you to a conference to discuss what factors could influence Russia after the end of Putin's rule – will Russian politics be more of the same? Would Russia continue to threaten its neighbouring states like Ukraine? Or might it change fundamentally our assumptions about what Russia is? We have gathered leading academics, Russia experts, and members of civil society to examine this contentious topic. Conference participants include jailed Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny's chief of staff, Leonid Volkov, who will discuss the potential for democracy to prevail in a Russia where Putin is no longer President.

Specific panels will also examine the power of the Russian oligarchy and corruption, the role of civil society and human rights, and the aftershocks of the War in Ukraine on a post-Putin Russia and its international standing. Will a new Russia deepen its engagement with China, or is there a chance it might begin mending ties with the West? Join AIIA Victoria co-hosting with La Trobe University for one of the most timely and pressing international relations discussions.

Conference participants are welcome to attend one or multiple panels. (Speakers and program overleaf).

[BOOK ONLINE HERE](#)

Premium Members: **\$45**. Standard Members: **\$65**. Young Professionals: **free** (limited spaces). Non-Members: **\$85**.

Tickets include morning coffee; buffet lunch; afternoon tea.

AIIA Victoria gratefully acknowledges the Walter Mangold Trust Fund for its ongoing support of our young members.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

- 10:00 – 10:30** Registration of participants; coffee on arrival
- 10:30 – 10:45** **Conference Introduction.** Richard Iron CMG OBE
- PANEL 1**
- 10:45 – 11:30** **The Impact of the Ukraine War on post-Putin Russia.**
Assoc. Prof. Matt Sussex
The Problem of PMCs. Isabella Currie
- 11:30 – 11:45** *Break*
- PANEL 2**
- 11:45 – 12:45** **The Role of Oligarchy in Shaping post-Putin Russia.**
Hon. Assoc. Prof. Stephen Fortescue
The Potential Impact of Corruption post-Putin.
Professor Emeritus Leslie Holmes
Russia's 'Traditional Values' Statecraft: Implications for LGBTQ Rights Post-Putin. Assoc. Prof. Cai Wilkinson
- 13:00 – 13:45** *Buffet Lunch*
- 13:45 – 14:30** **Keynote speech (by Zoom): Is a Democratic Future Possible for Russia? Leonid Volkov**
- PANEL 3**
- 14:30 – 15:30** **The Role of Civil and Uncivil Society in post-Putin Russia.**
Dr Robert Horvath
How a post-Putin Russia might Navigate the International Legal Legacy of the War. Dr Carrie McDougall
The Implications of Putin's Manipulation of Russian History.
Professor Mark Edele
- 15:30 – 15:45** *Break*
- 15:45 – 16:30** **Roundtable Discussion.** Led by Dr Robert Horvath and Jon Richardson.

[BOOK ONLINE HERE](#)

Premium Members: **\$45**. Standard Members: **\$65**. Young Professionals: **free** (limited spaces). Non-Members: **\$85**.

Tickets include morning coffee; buffet lunch; afternoon tea.

AIIA Victoria gratefully acknowledges the Walter Mangold Trust Fund for its ongoing support of our young members.



Panel Speakers



Isabella Currie is a Graduate Researcher and PhD candidate at La Trobe University. Her research focuses on the Wagner Group and its role in international relations. Her research interests also include foreign interference, authoritarian regimes, security, private and semi-state actors, and geopolitics. With a background in digital strategy complementing her expertise in international politics, Currie also has a keen interest in exploring the intersection of digital and cyber tools with the field of international relations. She is fascinated by the role of digital communication tools in contemporary political processes and their influence on societal decision-making.



Prof. Mark Edele is Hansen Professor in History and Deputy Dean in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne. He is the author of six books on the history of the Soviet Union, most recently *Stalinism at War: The Soviet Union in World War II*. He has worked in archives in Russia, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Germany and the United States. He teaches the histories of the Soviet Union, of World War II, and of dictatorship and democracy in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



Dr Stephen Fortescue is an Honorary Associate Professor at the University of New South Wales School of Social Sciences and a Visiting Fellow at the ANU Centre for European Studies. His research specialisations include the Russian policy-making process, the Russian coal and metal sectors, and Russian trade corridors. His latest publication explores how Russia's coal companies incorporate the vulnerabilities and risks associated with climate change and how this aligns with Russian government policy on the coal industry. He publishes regularly on a wide range of issues related to the Russian mining and metal sectors.

[BOOK ONLINE HERE](#)

Premium Members: **\$45**. Standard Members: **\$65**. Young Professionals: **free** (limited spaces). Non-Members: **\$85**.

Tickets include morning coffee; buffet lunch; afternoon tea.

AIIA Victoria gratefully acknowledges the Walter Mangold Trust Fund for its ongoing support of our young members.



Prof. Leslie Holmes is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of Melbourne. He was previously President of the International Council for Central and East European Studies and President of the Australian Political Studies Association. He has been a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia since 1995, and regularly teaches advanced courses on corruption at the University of Bologna, the Graduate School of Social Research in Warsaw, and the International Anti-Corruption Academy in Vienna. He has published seven single-authored books, including *Rotten States?* and *Communism*, and his work has been translated into twelve languages.



Dr Robert Horvath is a specialist in Russian Politics. His most recent book, *Putin's Fascists: Russkii Obraz and the Politics of Managed Nationalism in Russia*, focuses on the link between the Putin regime and radical nationalism in Russia. He is currently pursuing research into the Putin regime's manipulation of Russian nationalism, its assault on international human rights institutions, and its intervention in Africa. His commentary has been published in *The Age*, *The Australian*, *The Conversation*, *The Lowy Interpreter*, and *The Canberra Times*. He has appeared on ABC's *Four Corners*, the BBC World News, Channel 9's *Under Investigation* and *A Current Affair*.



Dr Carrie McDougall re-joined Melbourne Law School as a Senior Lecturer in 2018, after nearly a decade working for the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). While at DFAT she served first as a Legal Specialist and Assistant Director of the International Law Section. In this role, she provided advice on Australian operations in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, and on the full suite of legal issues considered during Australia's term on the United Nations Security Council. She has also served as the Legal Adviser at Australia's Mission to the United Nations in New York. Among other things, she led Australia's UN engagement on the Responsibility to Protect. She also played a significant role in negotiations on the establishment of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Syria.

[BOOK ONLINE HERE](#)

Premium Members: **\$45**. Standard Members: **\$65**. Young Professionals: **free** (limited spaces). Non-Members: **\$85**.

Tickets include morning coffee; buffet lunch; afternoon tea.

AIIA Victoria gratefully acknowledges the Walter Mangold Trust Fund for its ongoing support of our young members.



Assoc. Prof. Matt Sussex is a Fellow at the ANU Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the ANU Coral Bell School of Asia Pacific Affairs. He specialises in Russian foreign and security policy, but his interests also cover: government and politics in Eurasia; strategic studies; terrorism and counter-terrorism; energy security; and Australian foreign policy. He is particularly interested in contemporary trends in violent conflict, especially in hybrid warfare and in the evolution of propaganda. His recent solo and collaborative book projects include Eurasian Integration, Central Asia and the New Geopolitics of Energy; Power, Politics and Confrontation in Eurasia; Violence and the State; and Conflict in the Former USSR.



Leonid Volkov is chief of staff for Alexey Navalny and political director of Navalny's team. He was campaign manager for Navalny's mayoral campaign in Moscow in 2013, as well as for his bid to get onto the presidential ballot in 2018. Between 2017 and 2021 Leonid Volkov has created and led Team Navalny's network of regional offices in 45 Russia's largest cities. Currently operating from Lithuania, Leonid oversees Team Navalny's international and domestic political projects.



Dr Cai Wilkinson is an Associate Professor in International Relations at Deakin University. Her research focuses on societal security in the post-Soviet space, with a particular focus on LGBTQ human rights and "traditional values" in Russia and Kyrgyzstan, as well as on interrogating the role of genders and sexualities in international politics. Her work has been published in journals including Security Dialogue, Journal of Human Rights, Nationalities Papers, and Critical Studies on Security. She is currently working on projects about the politics of LGBT rights and "traditional values", and queer knowledges.

[BOOK ONLINE HERE](#)

Premium Members: **\$45**. Standard Members: **\$65**. Young Professionals: **free** (limited spaces). Non-Members: **\$85**.

Tickets include morning coffee; buffet lunch; afternoon tea.

AIIA Victoria gratefully acknowledges the Walter Mangold Trust Fund for its ongoing support of our young members.



Jon Richardson is a Visiting Fellow at the ANU Centre for European Studies. He is a former diplomat who covered Eastern Europe in Moscow (in the Soviet Union and later Russia), Belgrade, London and Canberra. He also served as High Commissioner to Nigeria and Ghana. Prior to joining DFAT he was a postgraduate researcher and tutor in Soviet politics and history at the ANU.



Richard Iron CMG OBE is President of AIIA Victoria. He previously served in the British Army in Northern Ireland, the Falkland Islands, Oman, the Balkans, Sierra Leone and Iraq. He was a visiting fellow at the Changing Character of War programme at the University of Oxford and was lead editor of British Generals in Blair's Wars, and How Wars End: Theory and Practice.

[BOOK ONLINE HERE](#)

Premium Members: **\$45**. Standard Members: **\$65**. Young Professionals: **free** (limited spaces). Non-Members: **\$85**.

Tickets include morning coffee; buffet lunch; afternoon tea.

AIIA Victoria gratefully acknowledges the Walter Mangold Trust Fund for its ongoing support of our young members.