



**SCHOLARS**  
STRATEGY NETWORK

## Grant Terminated: Democracy Research

**Julie Anne Weaver**, Harvard University

**Jessica Gottlieb**, University of Houston

We lost funding for the **Democratic Erosion Consortium** (DEC) as part of the federal government's recent cancellation of foreign assistance grants. Directed by scholars at Brown University, the University of Houston and American University, DEC works to make academic research on democratic backsliding accessible to policymakers and practitioners seeking evidence-based strategies to defend democracy around the globe.

Originally launched in 2017 on a shoestring budget, DEC began as an effort to improve pedagogy on a troubling trend observable both abroad and at home: the strategic dismantling of democratic norms and institutions by elected leaders with autocratic ambitions. In 2022, in line with the U.S. government's dual interests in democratic resilience and evidence-based policymaking, we received a grant from the State Department to expand DEC's work.