



Damon Wilson's Biography

Damon Wilson is President and CEO of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), a congressionally funded, private foundation dedicated to advancing freedom and democracy worldwide. NED is grounded in the belief that freedom and fundamental rights belong to everyone, and that advancing them bolsters the security and prosperity of the United States.

NED supports grassroots leaders striving for the freedom to think, speak, worship, engage politically, and support their families without fear. It mobilizes key pillars of American democracy, from political parties to business and labor, to support counterparts abroad through the Core institutes that form the NED family: the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, the Center for International Private Enterprise, and the Solidarity Center.

Under Wilson's leadership, NED has sharpened its strategy, making venture capital-style investments in freedom entrepreneurs advancing democracy in their own countries. He has prioritized impact and efficiency, harnessing technology to drive democratic gains, and ensuring resources flow faster, smarter, and more strategically to those on the frontlines of freedom, particularly in the most repressive environments.

Before joining NED, Wilson served as Executive Vice President at the Atlantic Council, where he helped build the Council's global profile and deepen cooperation among democracies against American adversaries. He served in the George W. Bush White House as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for European Affairs on the National Security Council, where he helped strengthen NATO, counter Russian aggression, and expand cooperation between the United States and Europe to meet global challenges.

Wilson has also held senior roles at NATO Headquarters in Brussels, at the U.S. Department of State, and at U.S. embassies in Baghdad and Beijing, where he advanced U.S. foreign policy on a wide range of issues, from NATO enlargement, counterterrorism and alliance coordination to China strategy, human rights, and conflict management and prevention. He began his career with Save the Children in Rwanda.

A proud South Carolinian, Wilson has earned recognition from allied governments for his contributions to freedom and security. He lives in Washington, D.C. Wilson enjoys going back home to the Low Country whenever possible.