

# What explains opposition to open immigration systems?

Academic research consistently suggests that massive economic gains—on the order of trillions of dollars—could be realized by expanding immigration in the United States. If there are such gains to be had, why do policymakers fail to pick them up?

**The Center for Growth and Opportunity at Utah State University invites research proposals that explore potential explanations for the opposition to immigration policy.**

The two most common explanations for the closed immigration systems seen in modern countries include cultural frictions and opposition from special interest groups and economic sectors.

As of yet, these explanations are not well-understood. Are these explanations sound? Are there ways to design immigration policies that resolve these tensions?

We invite submissions from researchers answering the overarching question:

## **What explains opposition to open immigration systems?**

The following are examples of research questions worth considering:

- What is the relationship between immigration and social capital?
- What are the relationships between immigration, nationalism, and national identity?
- Do cultural barriers affect the realization of the benefits of immigration?
- Are cultural, economic, safety, or other concerns the primary driver of opposition to immigration?
- How does the social safety net affect views towards immigration? For example, unemployment benefits may make US workers more open to competition from new immigrants, but concerns about public spending on new immigrants could decrease support for immigration.

Submissions that answer these questions using naturally occurring data or incentive-compatible experimental data are especially welcome.

**Submission details:** Please submit a brief proposal that describes your research question, your intended methodology, and how your research will contribute to policy discussions around immigration policy. Proposals should be submitted to Josh Smith ([josh@thecgo.org](mailto:josh@thecgo.org)) on or before **September 30, 2022**.

**Honorarium and support:** Authors of accepted papers will be eligible to receive a \$2,000 honorarium as well as assistance from student research fellows. In addition, the CGO is able to support laboratory experiments through its experimental economics lab.

Authors will also benefit from robust feedback on their research, giving them the opportunity to revise their work before eventual submission to an academic journal. The CGO provides outreach and media support to authors interested in sharing the findings of their research to relevant audiences to maximize the reach and impact of their findings.

For more information, go to <https://thecgo.org>.