



Baku ^{19th} annual Summer Energy School

Jun 23-Jul 4, 2025

Baku Summer Energy School

ADA University Institute for Development and Diplomacy in partnership with the ADA University Foundation, bp Azerbaijan, State Oil Company of the Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR), and KOLIN Azerbaijan organizes its annual 19th Baku Summer Energy School (BSES). This international program is scheduled for June 23 - July 4th, 2025 and will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

This two-week certificate program unites esteemed scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to explore and deepen their understanding of global and Caspian energy and environmental challenges. This year there will be a specific emphasis on energy connectivity and issues related to the Middle Corridor. Participants will engage in discussions on diverse topics such as energy fundamentals, energy law and economics, environmental issues, climate change, oil and gas management, carbon capture and sequestration, along with insights from major energy companies including SOCAR and BP.

The Baku Summer Energy School presents extensive networking opportunities with global leaders from the public and private sectors. Participants will have the opportunity to engage with key speakers, including the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Energy, and Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, as well as executives from leading energy companies like SOCAR, BP, Masdar, GL, Kolin and more.

ADA University

Started functioning as a training institute to meet the urgent needs of the expanding diplomatic service of Azerbaijan. It has developed into a university with schools, providing graduate and undergraduate degree programs as well as Executive for professionals in government and the business sector. Presently, ADA University is a public full-fledged Higher Education Institution committed to fostering collaborative research on diplomacy, public and international affairs, business, the humanities and sciences, information technologies, and systems engineering, architecture and design, agriculture and food science. ADA University now enrolls students at the graduate and undergraduate levels from 25 countries across the world. For more information, please visit www.ada.edu.az.

Institute of Diplomacy and Development

Institute for Development and Diplomacy (IDD) is a policy driven think tank established within the ADA University with an aim to deepen engagement and outreach with expert, research, and policymaking communities, not only in Azerbaijan and other parts of the Silk Road region, but across the globe.

Modeled on the best practices of leading world-class research institution abroad, IDD will serve as the university's hub of policy-oriented, interdisciplinary research and analysis outputs as well as be the focal point of high-level, policy-oriented conferences, briefings, and workshops. Program for Energy and Sustainable Development of the IDD is the key platform of the Institute for Development and Diplomacy (IDD) producing policy analyses and leading public discussions on energy and sustainable development in Azerbaijan and the wider Caspian region as well as educating and promoting effective policy in the respected areas. For more information, please visit www.idd.az.

PROGRAM SPEAKERS & EXPERTS



Ambassador Dr. Hafiz Pashayev Rector, ADA University

Ambassador Hafiz Pashayev is the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the founding Rector of ADA University. He was the first and longest serving Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United States (1992-2006), also being accredited in the United Mexican States and Canada. Upon completion of his diplomatic tenure Mr. Pashayev returned to Baku to establish the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, which has grown under his leadership from the training center for diplomats into a full-fledged university with four schools, offering graduate and undergraduate degree programs.

A scholar himself, Hafiz Pashayev received his bachelor's degree in physics from the Azerbaijan State University in 1963 and joined the Physics Institute of the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences, advancing from the position of the researcher to the head of the Metal Physics laboratory over the years. He got his PhD in Solid-State Physics in 1971 and full Doctorate in 1984. In 1975-1976, he became a visiting researcher scholar at the University of California, Irvine. Professor Pashayev has authored more than hundred scientific articles and two monographs in the field of Physics. He published two books- "Racing Up the Hill" (2006) and "Manifesto of an Ambassador" (2007) based on his memoirs of diplomatic service in Washington, D.C.



Dr. Fariz Ismailzade

Vice Rector, ADA University; Director of the Institute for Development and Diplomacy

Dr. Fariz Ismailzade is Vice Rector for Government, External and Student Affairs at ADA University, Director of the Institute for Development and Diplomacy (IDD), Board member of State Examination Center (since 2016) and visiting research fellow at Princeton University (2021).

Dr. Ismailzade has done research at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C and Embassy of Azerbaijan in the US. His research interests include political affairs in the Caucasus and Central Asia, energy security, and development. He has presented papers at the symposiums at Heritage Foundation, MGIMO, Columbia University, Stanford University, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, UCLA, Vienna Diplomatic Academy as well as at international conferences such as Association for Study of Nationalities (ASN), Wilton Park Conferences, Middle East Studies Association (MESA), German Marshall Fund and NATO Advanced Research Workshop.

Dr. Ismailzade received his Doctoral Degree from the Maastricht School of Management. He holds an Executive MBA from IE Business School (Spain), and a master's degree in Social and Economic Development from Washington University in St. Louis, and a bachelor's degree in Political Science from Western University in Baku with one-year interim studies at Wesleyan University in Connecticut.



Dr. Elnur Soltanov

Deputy Minister of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Dr. Elnur Soltanov is the Deputy Minister of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Dr. Elnur Soltanov has been appointed as Chief Executive Officer of COP29 Azerbaijan as of January 2024.

Prior to his current position, he was involved in pedagogical activities at Texas Tech University, Slippery Rock University and Truman State University during the period 2004-2009. Also, he worked at ADA University as a Professor, Director of the Caspian Energy and Environment Center, and Dean at the School of Public and International Relations during the period 2009-2018. By the order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan of January 23, 2021, Mr. Soltanov was appointed a Member of the Supervisory Board of State Oil Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Soltanov holds bachelor and Master's degrees in international relations at the Middle East Technical University in Turkey. He completed a PhD on Political Sciences at Texas Tech University, USA during the period 2003-2009.



Ms. Ziba Mustafayeva

Vice President, SOCAR

Ms. Mustafayeva started her career at "Azercell Telekom" LLC in 2000. Since January 2000, Ziba worked as a junior representative in the Customer Service department, and since November was promoted to lead the Telemarketing group. Between 2001-2004, Ziba Mustafayeva worked as a group leader of the Telephone Contact Center of the Customer Relations Department. In 2004-2006, Mustafayeva joined the Human Resources Department and worked as a representative of the Branch Management and Internal Communication Department, in 2006-2008, as the head of the Recruitment and Business Units Management Department, and in 2008-2010, as the head of the Organizational Development Department. From July 30, 2010, Mustafayeva became the head of the Human Resources Department, and in December, she was promoted to director of the department, followed by a new position as the director of the Human Capital Management Department from July 1, 2019, to February 14, 2022.

From March 2022, Mustafayeva worked as an adviser to the first vice president of SOCAR, and from July of the same year as an adviser to the president of SOCAR. By the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Ilham Aliyev dated July 28, 2023, Ziba Mustafayeva was appointed as the vice president of the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic.

In 1996, Ziba entered the International Economic Relations department of the Azerbaijan State University of Economics, graduating in 2001 a BA, and then receiving an MA Degree from the same department in 2003. In 1998-1999, Ziba successfully passed the competition of the "FSA" program of the US Embassy and studied General Economics at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, USA.



Dr. Bakhtiyar Aslanbayli

Vice President for the Caspian region, Communications and External Affairs

Bakhtiyar has been with bp for about 20 years and has held a number of leadership roles across communications and external affairs, tax and customs, ethics and compliance as well as business services.

In 2017, Bakhtiyar was awarded the 'Progress' medal by the President of Azerbaijan for his significant contribution to the development of the oil and gas industry in the country.

Bakhtiyar holds bachelor's and masters degrees in international relations from the Baku State University.



Dr. Michael Denison

Head of International Advisory, bp

Michael Denison heads bp's International Advisory team, which is based in London. He has 25 years' commercial, government and academic experience in the energy sector, working across the value chain. Michael has provided political advice for bp's new and existing business in over 30 jurisdictions, mainly in Europe, the Middle East and former Soviet Union. Before joining bp in 2013, Michael was Special Adviser to UK Foreign Secretary David Miliband and Global Research Director at Control Risks, an international business consultancy. Michael has been Visiting Fellow and Lecturer at the University of St Andrews and Associate Fellow on the Russia and Eurasia Programme at Chatham House, publishing and lecturing widely on international politics and security issues.

He holds an MA in Modern History from Oxford University, LLM in International Energy Law from City Law School, London and PhD in Political Science from the University of Leeds. He currently leads the International Energy Law and Project Finance Law modules for LLM students at City Law School.



Mr. Orkhan Zeynalov

Deputy Minister, Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan

Orkhan Zeynalov is a seasoned professional with over 20 years of experience in international development, diplomacy, and policy, with a strong track record in energy, climate, transport, and regional cooperation.

He has served in key diplomatic postings in New Delhi, Vienna, Tehran, and Washington, D.C., and held leadership roles in multilateral organizations, including as Director for Energy, Minerals and Environment at the ECO Secretariat, where he led delegations to COP21 and the UN Sustainable Development Summit. From 2020 to 2022, he was Director for International Cooperation at Azerbaijan's Ministry of Energy, leading strategic negotiations with the EU and Turkmenistan. He returned to the Foreign Ministry as Director of Economic Cooperation and played a leading role in COP29 preparations. In April 2024, he was appointed Deputy Minister of Energy.



Mr. Fagan Abdurahmanov

Deputy Director, Azerbaijan Renewable Energy Agency

Fagan Abdurahmanov is the Deputy Director of the Azerbaijan Renewable Energy Agency, a governmental body operating under the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan. With over 13 years of experience in the renewable energy sector, he plays a key role in advancing the country's transition to sustainable energy sources.

In addition to his government work, Fagan is a lecturer at the Azerbaijan State University of Economics (UNEC Business School), where he teaches courses on green energy, mentoring future leaders in the energy field.

He holds a Master's degree in Wind Power Project Management from Uppsala University in Sweden.



Dr. Vitaliy Baylarbayov

Deputy Vice-President, SOCAR



Dr. Baylarbayov has over 30 years of experience in the oil and gas industry and holds a PhD in Economics. He is member of the Association of International Petroleum Negotiators and has held executive positions in the negotiations and management of a number of major oil and gas projects, including the Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli oilfields, the Shah Deniz gas/condensate field, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, and the Southern Gas Corridor Projects, including the expansion of the Southern Caucasus Pipeline and the establishment of the Trans-Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP) and the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP).


Dr. Baylarbayov is also the Head of the Southern Gas Corridor Gas Value Chain Integration Team. Board member for Sarmatia Crude Oil Pipeline Project and the AGRI LNG project.

Dr. Brenda Shaffer

Professor, US Naval Postgraduate School



Prof. Brenda Shaffer is an international energy and foreign policy specialist, focusing on politics and energy in the Caspian region, energy security policies, European energy security, ethnic politics in Iran, and Eastern Mediterranean energy. She is a faculty member at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School. Prof. Shaffer is also Senior Advisor for Energy at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) think tank and a Senior Fellow at the Atlantic Council's Global Energy Center in Washington, DC. Prof. Shaffer frequently provides research and expert counsel to international institutions, governments, energy companies, financial institutions, and regional security organizations. Shaffer has served as an advisor to Israel's Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Energy on policy related to the major natural gas discoveries in Israel. She has advised several companies involved in Caspian energy production and export. She has given testimony to several committees of the US Congress, including the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and to the European Parliament. Brenda frequently appears on Bloomberg TV and in major news outlets worldwide to provide insight on developments in the global oil market.





Mr. Vladimir Rogov

Managing Director & Partner, BCG

Mr. Rogov is a core member of BCG's Energy practice, with deep expertise in oil and gas, and extensive experience advising clients across the Caspian region, the United States, the Middle East, Europe, and India. Since joining BCG in 2005, he has led a wide range of strategic and operational projects, including large-scale capital investments, M&A evaluations, long-term energy planning, organizational redesigns, and performance improvement initiatives. His work also focuses on implementing new management systems and digital transformations within energy companies. Prior to joining BCG, Vladimir worked at the Swedish Trade Council, where he developed and executed market-entry strategies for Swedish industrial firms.

He holds both a BA and an MA in Economics, graduating cum laude from Moscow State University.



Prof. Samuel Furfari

Professor, ULB & ESCP Business School London

Former Directorate-General for Energy, European Commission

Dr. Samuel Furfari achieved a PhD in energy studies from the Université Libre de Bruxelles in 1982. From then to 2018, he served as a Senior Official in energy policy in DG Energy in the European Commission, pioneering the strategic direction of EU Energy Policy.

In parallel, he was Professor in Energy Policy and Geopolitics at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and currently teaches at the ESCP Business School in London. He is a Knight of the Order of Merit of Poland. He is author of many papers and 18 books, his most recent being "Energy Insecurity – The Organized Destruction of European Competitiveness".



Mr. Fuad Akhundov

Historian and Cultural Commentator

Fuad Huseyn oglu Akhundov is an Azerbaijani journalist, television presenter, guide, and prominent researcher of Baku's history and architecture. Known for his engaging storytelling and deep knowledge of the city's past, he has authored and hosted several historical programs, including "Bakı Sirləri" (Secrets of Baku) on Public Television from 2006 to 2011 and "Əsrlər, Nəsillər" (Centuries, Generations) on AzTV since 2020. He regularly contributes to media outlets such as AZERTAC, Bakinskiy Rabochiy, Vışka, 525-ci qəzet, and various journals including Baku and Azerbaijan International. Since December 2023, he has also appeared as a guest on the YouTube series Qafqaz Xəbərləri.

Akhundov began his career in the late 1980s, working in the healthcare sector before transitioning into education, where he taught Russian and English and conducted extracurricular courses on Baku's history. His passion for the city's heritage has shaped his lifelong commitment to public education and historical preservation.

He holds a bachelor's degree in Oriental Studies from Baku State University and earned a Master of Public Administration from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government in 2001. He later completed a Master of Arts in Education at the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.



Mr. Elchin Targuluyev

Solar and Wind Energy Expert, SOCAR Green

Elchin Targuluyev is a renewable energy engineer with over five years of multidisciplinary experience across various segments of the energy sector. He currently serves as the Solar and Wind Energy Expert at SOCAR Green, where he leads technical feasibility assessments for all of the company's solar and wind energy initiatives. Prior to this role, he worked as a renewable energy consultant in the private sector and served as a Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, contributing to policy development and project advisory efforts. He has also worked as a course instructor at the Azerbaijan State Oil and Industry University, where he lectured on wind energy at the Master's level.

Elchin holds a Bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering with a specialization in Energy and Environment, as well as a Master of Engineering in Sustainable Energy Engineering, both from the University of Toronto, Canada.



Mr. Ali Orujzade

Stakeholder Engagement Manager, SOCAR Green

Ali Orujzade is a chemical engineer with experience in renewable energy, sustainable process development, and circular technologies. As the Stakeholder Engagement Manager at SOCAR Green, he builds partnerships, develops projects, and supports Azerbaijan's transition to cleaner energy systems - particularly in the areas of bioenergy and carbon reduction. Previously, Ali worked at Bright Renewables, a leading provider of turnkey biogas and biomethane upgrading systems, where he was involved in sales and process engineering. He also gained experience at Northvolt - formerly the EU's largest lithium-ion battery manufacturer - contributing to equipment commissioning and process optimization.

He earned his Bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering with honors from Baku Higher Oil School and later completed a Master's degree at the University of Twente in the Netherlands, specializing in process engineering and conducting research on atmospheric CO₂ capture via direct air capture.



Mr. Murad Sadikhov

Country Manager, Masdar Azerbaijan

Murad Sadikhov is the country manager of Masdar Azerbaijan. Mr. Sadikov is a senior-level professional experienced as CEO and CxO in private companies for about 10 years. He has worked as First Deputy CEO in Nobel Oil LTD (2013 – 2016), Director General at Vita-A Ltd, Business Development Executive at Mineks and Allen FZC, Senior Partner and Business Development Executive at BDM Solutions LLC and Business Development Manager at Aramco Overseas Company. Since May 2021, Murad Sadikhov has been holding the position of country manager at Masdar Azerbaijan.

He has graduated from Baku State University in Atomic and Molecular Physics, as well as from Lomonosov Moscow State University in Economics. Moreover, he has graduated from Joint Vienna Institute in Applied Economics and has got his Masters degree in Business Administration from Koc University, Istanbul.



Dr. Molnar Ferenc

Advisor to MVM Ltd. Deputy CEO for Infrastructure
Head of MVM Department of Óbuda University

Mr. Ferenc Molnár PhD has nearly four decades of experience in the electricity industry, especially in the fields of large-scale power plant investments, renewable energy sources, electricity grid developments, and the development of energy storage technologies. He currently works as an advisor to the Deputy CEO of MVM Ltd. Infrastructure. His current key responsibility is the field of labour safety, work safety and operational safety in relation to member companies.

He has held various professional management roles at the MVM Group for over 37 years, starting as a commissioning engineer before leading major power plant and electricity network projects. He managed key initiatives, including the 20-year life extension of the Paks Nuclear Power Plant and Hungary's first 20MW+ solar power investments. In 2015, he served as managing director of MVM Energy Romania and the Úz-Valley Hydroelectric Power Plant. He received the MVM Group Person of the Year award in 2019. He leads a department and teaches at Óbuda University, where he also supervises PhD and diploma theses. A frequent speaker at professional conferences, he regularly serves on PhD defense and final exam committees. He is a board member of the Energy Management Scientific Association and president of its renewable energy department.

Mr. Molnár holds MSc degrees in electrical engineering, MSc in economics, nuclear special engineering, and a technical PhD from Óbuda University and the Budapest University of Technology and Economics. His research area is the security of electricity supply in light of the rise of carbon-free energy sources.



Mr. Jahangir Arasli

Senior Research Fellow, Institute for Development and Diplomacy

Mr. Jahangir E. Arasli is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Development and Diplomacy (IDD). His major roles include planning, coordinating, and implementing research, as well as promoting, and spreading policy research activities of IDD among key stakeholders and building a network locally and internationally in accordance with IDD strategy. His past experience includes service in the Soviet military advisory groups in North Africa and the Gulf, and jobs in the foreign relations establishment in Moscow, USSR (in the 80s) and the defence establishment in Azerbaijan (since the 90s). Areas of his research interest include modern warfare, counterterrorism, violent (terrorist, insurgent, and political extremist) non-state actors, low-intensity conflicts, new security threats and challenges, civil-military relations, decision-making in the national security domain, and security sector's reform.

Jahangir Arasli holds a dual MA degree in Oriental Studies from Moscow's Institute of the Countries of Asia and Africa and in National Security Studies / Civil-Military Relations from US Naval Postgraduate School. He also graduated from the courses in George C. Marshall Center, NATO Defence College, Cranfield University / UK Defence Academy, and the Geneva Center for Security Policy.



Prof. Damjan Krnjevic

Director for Policy Research, Analysis and Publications, IDD
Professor of Practice, ADA University

Mr. Damjan Krnjević Mišković is Director for Policy Research, Analysis, and Publications at the Institute for Development and Diplomacy (IDD) and Professor of Practice at ADA University where he teaches courses on classical grand strategy and contemporary geopolitics. He previously served as a senior political strategist, diplomatic adviser, and crisis counselor at both international and national levels, accumulating a decade of executive-level policymaking responsibility at the highest levels of the Serbian government and the United Nations.

He also has more than a decade of experience in academia and the think-tank world, during which he served inter alia as the Managing Editor of The National Interest. He currently also serves as the Co-Editor of IDD's flagship English-language quarterly policy journal titled Baku Dialogues and oversees all research and analysis published by IDD.



Mr. John Roberts

Energy Security Specialist, Methinks
Senior Fellow, Atlantic Council

Mr. John M. Roberts is a nonresident senior fellow at Atlantic Council's Global Energy Center. He is also a senior partner with Methinks Ltd, a consultancy specializing in the interrelationship between energy, economic development, and politics. He has expertise in the development of energy in the Caucasus and Central Asia and in the pipelines connecting or intended to connect the Caspian to China, Russia, India, and Europe.

Roberts is one of Europe's leading energy security specialists. He served as managing editor at Platts for twelve years and previously with Financial Times Energy, focusing on the development of energy and on the impact of energy on development. In assessing global energy security issues, he has regularly toured the Gulf and the Caspian, as well as visited the Alaskan North Slope, the Athabasca Tar Sands, China, Norway, and Venezuela. He has also testified to UK parliamentary committees on Turkish, Russian, Caspian, and Mideast energy security issues. He is currently researching shale gas development in China and hydrocarbons development in the Eastern Mediterranean and Northern Iraq.



Mr. Yalchin Rafiyev

Deputy Foreign Minister, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan

Mr. Rafiyev serves as Deputy Foreign Minister and has worked at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for almost two decades. He has served in multiple roles to advance multilateral diplomacy, including as Third and Second Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the UN Office in Vienna and the First Secretary at the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the UN Office in Geneva. Also, Yalchin Rafiyev was the Lead Negotiator for COP29 Azerbaijan. He has led the International Security Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan for some five years.

Mr. Rafiyev holds an Honours degree from Baku State University and has completed post-graduate programs at the NATO Defense College and the International Anti-Corruption Academy.



Mr. Ahmad Humbatov

Senior Fellow, Energy and Sustainable Development Program, IDD

Instructor, ADA University

Ahmad Humbatov is an international development professional with particular expertise in economic policy, energy, and trade. Mr. Humbatov worked at the World Bank office in Singapore, UN Secretariat in New York, and British Embassy in Baku.

He holds a BA degree in International Relations from St. Petersburg State University in Russia, MA degree in International Affairs from ADA University, MPP degree from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (LKYSPP) of the National University of Singapore and the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) of the Johns Hopkins University in Washington, D.C., United States and MPA degree from Harvard Kennedy School.



Mr. Barış Altıparmak

General Manager, Kolin Azerbaijan

Mr. Altıparmak has been extensively involved in strategic planning with a focus on international relations, as well as the development and execution of major Energy, Oil and Gas, Superstructure, and Infrastructure projects in the Caspian region. He has worked with top international contractors recognized by Engineering News-Record (ENR) and contributed to projects awarded as Best Global Projects in their respective categories. With nearly two decades of professional experience across Azerbaijan, Georgia, Türkiye, and North Africa, he has developed deep expertise in Corporate Relations, Government Affairs, and Construction Project Management.

Notably, he managed the development and coordination of U.S.-financed Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) projects in Georgia. He is a member of the International Association for Contract & Commercial Management (IACCM) and the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC), both based in the United States. Mr. Altıparmak also serves as an Executive Board Member of the Turkey–Azerbaijan Business Council under the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey (DEİK), and as the Country Representative of the World Turkish Business Council (DTİK) in Azerbaijan.

Barış Altıparmak holds Bachelor and Master of Science degrees from Istanbul Technical University and has completed Executive Education programs in Strategy Development at London Business School and the Energy Program at ADA University.



Mr. Valeh Alasgarov

Chairman of the Board, Alat Free Economic Zone

Former Vice President of SOCAR

Mr. Valeh Alasgarov is a seasoned leader in the oil and gas industry, having served as the former Vice President of SOCAR (State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic). During his tenure, he played a pivotal role in shaping and executing key strategies for SOCAR's operations and development in Azerbaijan's energy sector.

Valeh Alasgarov's leadership contributed to enhancing the company's position and impact within the global energy market. The Chairman of the Board at Alat Free Economic Zone is a distinguished leader in economic development and governance, overseeing strategic initiatives and operations within the zone.



Mr. Bahruz Bahramov

Deputy CEO, State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan (SOFAZ)

Bahruz Bahramov currently serves as the Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the State Oil Fund of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SOFAZ), having been appointed to this position by Presidential Order No. 165 dated June 12, 2024. He has built a distinguished career within SOFAZ since joining in 2006, initially working as a trader and subsequently holding roles such as Senior Risk Analyst, Senior Trader, and Portfolio Manager within the Investment and Risk Management Department. From 2014 to 2016, he served as Deputy Director of the Risk Management Department, and from 2016 until September 2020, he held the position of Chief Risk Officer. Prior to becoming Deputy CEO, Mr. Bahramov served as Advisor to the CEO from September 2020.

He holds a Bachelor's degree in Finance from both Azerbaijan State Economic University (1999–2003) and the University of Nice–Sophia Antipolis in France (2003–2005), where he also completed a Master's degree in Finance in 2006. Mr. Bahramov is a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) and holds a Certificate in Investment Performance Measurement (CIPM).



Mr. Elshad Nasirov

Vice President for Investments and Marketing, SOCAR

Elshad Nasirov is the Vice President for Investments and Marketing at the State Oil Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan (SOCAR), a position he has held since his appointment by Presidential Decree on December 28, 2005. He began his diplomatic career in the early 1980s, serving at the USSR Embassy in Afghanistan and later holding various roles within the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including positions at the Institute of Oriental Studies and the Soviet Embassy in India.

Following Azerbaijan's independence, Mr. Nasirov represented the country at the Permanent Mission to the United Nations from 1992 to 1995, and then served as Deputy Head of Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan until 1997. He joined SOCAR the same year, where he led the International Economic Operations Office from 1997 to 2003 and the Marketing and Economic Operations Office from 2003 to 2005.

Mr. Nasirov graduated from the Moscow State Institute of International Relations and is fluent in Russian, English, Persian, and Indian. In recognition of his service, he was awarded the Glory Order by the President of Azerbaijan in 2010. Since 2003, he has also served as Vice President of the Association of Football Federations of Azerbaijan (AFFA).



Ms. Nargiz Ismayilova

Head of Partnerships, IDD

Ms. Nargiz Ismayilova, as the Head of Partnerships develops and maintains connections with external organizations, such as research institutions, businesses, and universities to further expand IDD's relations.

Her area of expertise includes EU-funded project management; implementing public administration and civil service reforms as well as institutional capacity building in Azerbaijan; participation in EU CIB and IRP implementation; proven experience in the formulation, development, drafting, and reviewing drafts of laws and regulations.

She holds a bachelor's degree in Oriental Studies from Baku State University and a master's degree in Law.



Ms. Hajar Huseynova

Senior Research Fellow, IDD

Ms. Hajar Huseynova is the Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Development and Diplomacy (IDD) of ADA University and serves as the Program Manager of the Baku Summer Energy School (BSES). In her dual role, she oversees the strategic planning and implementation of the BSES program, curating content, coordinating high-level speakers, and ensuring a dynamic, multidisciplinary learning experience for participants from around the world.

Hajar's expertise lies in green energy, environmental policy and management, sustainable development, and water resources management. She leads the production of high-quality research reports and publications and regularly teaches and conducts training sessions in these fields. She has collaborated with leading international organizations including the UNDP, GEF, GIZ, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, and NUPI, contributing to the intersection of policy, research, and capacity building to support sustainable and resilient development pathways in the region. She is the author of regular analytical papers and policy briefs focusing on Azerbaijan's energy transition, renewable energy development, water governance, and environmental policy gaps.

Hajar holds MA in Diplomacy and International Affairs from ADA University and BA in International Relations from Baku Slavic University.



Ms. Inara Yagubova

Senior Research Fellow, IDD

Ms. Inara Yagubova is a Research Fellow at the Institute for Development and Diplomacy (IDD). She has 8 years' experience in the management of the international projects in higher education and in coordination of large-scale international projects. She is delivering professional development trainings on soft skills for working professionals. Ms. Yagubova's research interest is in the field of Area Studies, EU's EaP policies, security studies and International sustainable development and connectivity.

Ms. Yagubova got her bachelor degree on International Relations from Baku State University. She has master diploma from ADA University on Master of Arts in Diplomacy and International Affairs. She got her second master's degree from the University of Bergamo (Italy) in Security studies.



Ms. Jala Abdullayeva

Graduate Student, Columbia University in the city of New York

Jala Abdullayeva has experience in public affairs, program coordination, and international event planning. She has worked with the Institute for Development and Diplomacy, organizing corporate training programs and building partnerships with local and international stakeholders. Jala was part of the organizing team for the last two editions of the Baku Summer Energy School, supporting logistics and participant engagement. Her interests lie in climate policy, energy, and sustainable development.

She is currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration at Columbia University, specializing in Climate, Energy, and Environment. She holds a BA in Public Affairs from ADA University and completed an exchange semester at Ca' Foscari University of Venice.