RSA Events – Event Report – FinGeo – FinGeo–RSA Annual Lecture Report



FinGeo–RSA Annual Lecture Report

Porto, 8 May 2025

Aim of the Event

The aim of the FinGeo–RSA Annual Lecture was to showcase cutting-edge research at the intersection of financial geography, political economy, and regional studies, while strengthening the long-standing collaboration between FinGeo and the RSA. The lecture provides a platform for leading scholars to share forward-looking insights that shape ongoing debates within the RSA community.

Attendance and Countries Represented

The event was attended by 30 participants. The audience included scholars and doctoral researchers from Europe, North America, Latin America, Asia, and Australia.

Speaker and Rationale for Selection

The lecture was delivered by Professor Adam Dixon *"The Limits to State Capital"*.

Adam was selected for this year's lecture because of his internationally recognised expertise on state capitalism, sovereign wealth funds, and the political economy of global investment — themes that speak directly to current discussions within FinGeo and the RSA. His recent work on the evolving role of the state in financial markets, particularly in relation to China, offered a timely contribution to debates on state power and global capitalism.

Programme Outline

1. Welcome and introduction (FinGeo and RSA representatives)
2. Keynote Lecture: *The Limits to State Capital* – Prof. Adam Dixon
3. Open Q&A and discussion
4. Closing remarks

Speaker Biography

Adam Dixon is the Adam Smith Chair in Sustainable Capitalism at Adam Smith's Panmure House, part of Edinburgh Business School. He is also the host of the *New Enlightenment* podcast. Professor Dixon is a world-leading scholar on sovereign wealth funds, state capitalism, and the relationship between markets and the state in the sustainability transition. Trained across the US, Spain, France, and the UK, he brings a distinctly interdisciplinary perspective. He has advised organisations including the OECD Development Centre, World Bank, European Commission, World Economic Forum, Center for Global Development, Chatham House, the Wilson Center, and the Pacific Pension & Investment Institute. His books include *The Specter of State Capitalism* (OUP, 2024), *Sovereign Wealth Funds: Between the State and Markets* (Agenda, 2022), *The Political Economy of Geoeconomics* (Palgrave, 2022), *The New Frontier Investors* (Palgrave, 2016), *The New Geography of Capitalism* (OUP, 2014), *Sovereign Wealth Funds* (Princeton, 2013), and *Managing Financial Risks* (OUP, 2009).

Social Activities

No separate social activities were organised around the lecture, as it was embedded within the RSA Annual Conference programme.

Conclusions and Contribution to the Network

The lecture advanced FinGeo's mission by deepening analytical engagement with the role of state-owned financial actors and their implications for regions and global economic governance. The discussion highlighted shifting patterns of state participation in global markets, including insights related to China's evolving financial strategies. The Q&A reflected strong interest from participants across multiple continents, underlining the relevance of state capital debates within financial geography and regional studies.

Future Actions

- Planning is underway for next year's Annual Lecture, building on the strong engagement seen in Porto.

Promotion of the RSA

The event was prominently promoted as part of the RSA Annual Conference and explicitly framed as a celebration of the long-standing partnership between FinGeo and the RSA. RSA branding and messaging were visible throughout the session, and the lecture announcement was circulated through RSA communication channels.



