Oliver McPherson-Smith

Dr. Oliver McPherson-Smith is an internationally recognized thought leader on energy and critical minerals policy. In early 2025, he led the creation of the National Energy Dominance Council in the White House and served as its inaugural Executive Director. He was subsequently appointed a member of the National Petroleum Council, which gives expert advice, information, and recommendations to the US federal government on matters relating to oil and natural gas. Prior to public service, Dr. McPherson-Smith worked on the 2024 Trump-Vance Transition Team and led the Center for Energy & Environment at the America First Policy Institute. From powering the next generation of artificial intelligence to strengthening critical mineral supply chains, he brings a first-hand perspective on the most pressing policy issues within the American energy sector.

A widely cited academic author, Dr. McPherson-Smith possesses an expert understanding of the geopolitics of energy. He graduated from the University of Cambridge, Harvard University, and the University of Oxford before joining Stanford University as a Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution. Dr. McPherson-Smith's award-winning research and analysis has been published in peer-reviewed journals and cited in The Economist, Newsweek, and numerous Nigerian daily newspapers. His first book, Crude Calculations: Entrepreneurship and Regime Stability amid the Energy Transition, was published by Cambridge University Press in January 2026. Across one hundred years of economic and political history in the largest oil-producing economies of Africa and the Middle East, the book details how non-democratic regimes have come to manipulate economic reform initiatives to maintain their grip on power during the rollercoaster of commodity booms and busts. Amid a global rise in renewable energy generation and critical mineral demand, the book predicts which of the world's resource-fueled autocrats can afford to reform their economies and which will cling to the economic status quo.