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Podesta Group

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The **Podesta Group** was a lobbying and public affairs firm based in Washington, D.C. It was founded in 1988 by brothers [John Podesta](#) and [Tony Podesta](#) and has previously been known as Podesta Associates, [podesta.com](#) and

Podesta Group, Inc.



Former type	Private
Industry	Government and public relations
Founded	1988; 31 years ago
Founders	John Podesta Tony Podesta
Defunct	2017
Headquarters	Washington, D.C. , U.S.
Key people	Kimberley Fritts (CEO)
Number of employees	70 ^{[<i>citation needed</i>]}
Website	www.podesta.com

[PodestaMattoon](#).^[1]^[2]

[John Podesta](#) left the firm in 1993,^[3] and [Tony Podesta](#) left the firm on October 30, 2017, after finding out about increased scrutiny of the firm.^[4] The firm most recently reorganized in January 2007 after current Chairman [Tony Podesta](#) split with former business partner [Dan Mattoon](#).^[2]



Congressman [Adam Schiff](#) and lobbyist [Heather Podesta](#) at a party hosted by the Podesta Group in Washington, D.C.

Podesta Group, which represents American corporations as well as [nonprofits](#) and [governments](#), was said in 2011 to have "close ties to the [Democratic Party](#) and the [Obama administration](#)",^[5] although its CEO Kimberley Fritts is identified in her [Cogent Strategies bio](#) as "a fixture in Republican politics". She resigned in November 2017 to establish her own firm, Cogent Strategies.

The firm reported earning [US\\$27.4 million](#) in lobbying fees in 2011.^[6] In 2007, Chairman Tony Podesta was ranked by his peers as the third most influential lobbyist in Washington.^[7]

On November 9, 2017, CEO Kimberley Fritts informed all employees that the Podesta Group would cease to exist at the end of the year. Employees were asked to clear out their desks and told that they may not be paid beyond November 15. On November 21, Podesta Group's website went offline being redirected to the personal website of Tony Podesta,^[8] with the majority of the Podesta Group's former principals having joined Cogent Strategies,^[9] a new firm founded by Kimberley Fritts in November 2017.^{[10][11]}

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The Podesta Group acted as a [lobbyist for Egypt](#) on US policies of concern, activities in [Congress](#) and the [executive branch](#), and developments on the United States political scene generally, according to forms filed with the [Department of Justice](#) in 2009.^{[5][12]}



[Tony Podesta](#) (*left*) with Senator [Kay Hagan](#) (*center*) and husband Chip

They also received \$900,000 in revenue in 2011–2012 from the [Brussels-based European Centre for a Modern Ukraine](#) (ECMU), a group sympathetic to then–Ukraine president [Viktor Yanukovich](#) and

(right) at a 2009 party hosted by Podesta Group

his [Party of Regions](#).^[13]

As of October 2017, the Podesta Group is

reported to be under investigation by [Special Counsel Robert Mueller](#) for potentially violating the [Foreign Agents Registration Act](#) in the course of its work for the ECMU. The Podesta Group was one of six lobbying firms that participated in a 2012–2014 public relations campaign organized by [Paul Manafort](#) on behalf of the ECMU and Ukraine's pro-Russian [Party of Regions](#); the campaign was reportedly designed with the stated goal of improving Ukraine's standing among Western audiences as a possible prelude to [Ukrainian membership in the European Union](#). A Podesta Group spokesman denied any wrongdoing.^[14] On October 30, 2017, a federal [grand jury](#) unsealed the indictment of Manafort and his deputy [Richard Gates](#). According to NBC News, the Podesta Group is mentioned in the indictment as one of the companies that lobbied on behalf of the Ukrainian government for Manafort and Gates. On that day, Tony Podesta stepped down as head of the Podesta Group.^[15]

The Podesta Group also represented (as of 2016) the interests of Russia's largest financial institution, [Sberbank of Russia](#), which controls approximately 30 percent of Russian banking assets.^[16]

The Podesta Group also carried out public relations work for the [government of Azerbaijan](#) for a monthly fee of \$60,000 plus expenses.^[17]

In addition, the Podesta Group has been retained by [Walmart](#), [BP](#), and [Lockheed Martin](#).^[5] Other clients include [Bank of America](#), the [Cherokee Nation](#) (casinos), [National Public Radio](#), and the [Republic of Kenya](#).^{[18][19][20]}

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External links [[edit](#)]

- [Official website](#) 
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