Anna Lisa Ahlers

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Google Scholar profile:
1,679 citations, h-index: 20
as of March 18, 2026

Structure

Books
Special issues
Articles
Book chapters
Policy papers, working papers, and other grey literature
Commissioned book reviews and book reviews
Media appearances, reports, and other public dissemination activities
Under review/in preparation
Publication output of research group under my leadership

Books

Ahlers, A.L., Krichewsky, D., Moser, E., & Stichweh, R. (2021). *Democratic and Authoritarian Political Systems in 21st Century World Society. Vol. I.: Differentiation, Inclusion, Responsiveness*. Bielefeld: Transcript.

Ahlers, A.L., Hansen, M.H. &, Svarverud, R. (2020). *The Great Smog of China: A Short History of Air Pollution*. Ann Arbour/New York: AAS Asia Shorts/Columbia University Press.

Ahlers, A.L. (2014). *Rural Policy Implementation in Contemporary China: New Socialist Countryside.* London: Routledge. 2nd printing, paperback 2017.

Schubert, G., & Ahlers, A.L. (2012). *Participation and Empowerment at the Grassroots: Chinese Village Elections in Perspective*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Special issues (as guest editor)

Anna, A.L., Eiterjord, T. &, Bewley, F. (forthcoming). Science and Foreign Policy in China's Global Engagement. *Minerva*. https://link.springer.com/collections/eihjgadhhf

Ahlers, A.L. (2019). Political Inclusion in Contemporary China. *Journal of Chinese Governance, 4*(3), 201-206. https://doi.org/10.1080/23812346.2019.1636604

Ahlers, A.L. (2018). Chinese Governance in the Era of "Top-level Design". *Journal of Chinese Governance, 3*(3), 263-267. https://doi.org/10.1080/23812346.2018.1487738

Articles (peer reviewed)

Ahlers, A.L. (2024). The Communist Party's Steering of China's Science, Technology, and Innovation System: Aspirations and Reality. *University of California IGCC and MERICS Policy Brief*, April 5. https://ucigcc.org/publication/the-communist-partys-steering-of-chinas-science-technology-and-innovation-system-aspirations-and-reality/

Ahlers, A.L., & Christmann-Budian, S. (2023). The Politics of University Rankings in China. *Higher Education, 86*, 751-770. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-023-01014-y

Heberer, T., & Ahlers, A.L. (2022). Wissenschaftskooperation mit der Volksrepublik China zwischen Moralisierung und Idealisierung (Academic cooperation with the People's Republic of China between moralization and idealization). *Forschung, 15*(3/4), 87-93.

Ahlers, A.L., & Stichweh, R. (2022). Die Bipolarität von Demokratie und Autoritarismus und ihre gesellschaftlichen Ursprünge (The bipolarity of democracy and authoritarianism and its societal origins). *Soziale Systeme*, *25*, 377-417. https://doi.org/10.1515/sosys-2020-0021

Ahlers, A.L., & Schubert, G. (2022). Nothing New under 'Top-Level Design'? A Review of the Conceptual Literature on Local Policy-Making in China. *Issues & Studies - A Social Science Quarterly on China, Taiwan, and East Asian Affairs*, *58*(1). https://doi.org/10.1142/S101325112150017X

Ahlers, A.L., & Heberer, T. (2021). Rekalibrierung der deutschen und europäischen Wissenschaftskooperation mit China: Mehr Augenhöhe und Austausch wagen (Recalibrating German and European science collaboration with China: Daring more eye level and exchange). *Berliner China-Hefte – Chinese History and Society, 53*, 56–68.

Ahlers, A.L., & Stichweh, R. (2019). The Bipolarity of Democracy and Authoritarianism: Value Patterns, Inclusion Roles and Forms of Internal Differentiation of Political Systems. *Sociologia & Antropologia,* 9(3), 819-846. https://doi.org/10.1590/2238-38752019v935 [revised version of Ahlers and Stichweh 2017]

Shen, Y., & Ahlers, A.L. (2019). Blue Sky Fabrication in China: Science-Policy Integration in Air Pollution Regulation Campaigns for Mega-Events. *Environmental Science and Policy, 94*, 135-142. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2018.12.005

Sagild, R.Å., & Ahlers, A.L. (2019). Honorary Intermediaries? The Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in Theory and Practice. *China Perspectives/Perspectives Chinoises, 2*, 9-16. https://doi.org/10.4000/chinaperspectives.9016

Shen, Y,. & Ahlers, A.L. (2018). Local Environmental Governance Innovation in China: Staging 'Triangular Dialogues' for Industrial Air Pollution Control. *Journal of Chinese Governance, 3*(3), 351-369. https://doi.org/10.1080/23812346.2018.1486347

Ahlers, A.L., & Shen, Y. (2018). Breathe Easy? Local Nuances of Authoritarian Environmentalism in China's Battle Against Air Pollution. *The China Quarterly, 234*, 299-319. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741017001370

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Ahlers, A.L. (2015). Weaving the Chinese Dream on the Ground? Local Government Approaches to "New-Typed" Rural Urbanization. *Journal of Chinese Political Science, 20*(2), 121-142. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11366-015-9342-6

Ahlers, A.L., & Schubert, G. (2015). Effective Policy Implementation in China's Local State. *Modern China, 41*(4)*,* 372- 405. https://doi.org/10.1177/0097700413519563

Ahlers, A.L., & Schubert, G. (2013). Strategic Modelling: "Building of a New Socialist Countryside" in Three Chinese Counties. *The China Quarterly, 216*, 831-849. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741013001045

Schubert, G., & Ahlers, A.L. (2012). County and Township Cadres as a Strategic Group: "Building a New Socialist Countryside" in Three Provinces. *The China Journal, 67*, 67-86. https://doi.org/10.1086/665740

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Ahlers, A.L., & Schubert, G. (2009). Building a New Socialist Countryside – Only a Political Slogan? *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs, 38*(4), 35-62. https://doi.org/10.1177/186810260903800403

Book chapters

Ahlers, A.L. (2024). Three Proposals for Broadening the Focus of Agnotology Studies – A Comment on Naomi Oreskes' "Four Obstacles to the Embrace of Agnotology in History of Science". In L. Verburgt (Ed.), *Debating New Approaches to the History of Science* (pp. 335-341). London: Bloomsbury.

Ahlers, A.L. (2023). Technocracy on the Ground: Cadre Competence, Expert Involvement, and Scientific Advice in China's Local Governance. In D. Goodman, & C. Ergenc (Eds.), *Handbook on Local Governance in China: Structures, Variations, and Innovations* (pp. 152-176). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar. https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800883246.00018

Schubert, G., & Ahlers, A.L. (2021). Elections and Post-election Governance in China's Villages and Townships. In H. X. Zhang, & Q. F. Zhang (Eds.), *Routledge Handbook of Rural China*. London: Routledge.

Ahlers, A.L., Heberer, T., & Schubert, G. (2019). The Critical Role of Local Governance in China's Political System. In J. Yu, & S. Guo (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Local Governance in Contemporary China* (pp. 73-93). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-2799-5_4 [Revised version of Ahlers, Heberer and Schubert, 2016]

Ahlers, A.L. (2018). 让蓝天重新绽放:德国鲁尔区的空气污染与治理 (Let a blue sky shine again: Air pollution governance in the German Ruhr area). In Z. Liu, & Hansen, M.H. (Eds.), 仰望窗外的天空——中外科学家对话空气环境与治理 (*A Window on the Sky: Chinese and Foreign Scholars Discuss the Atmospheric Environment and Its Governance*) (pp. 133-145). Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press.

Ahlers, A.L., & Schubert, G. (2018). Local Cadre Elites and Policy Implementation in Contemporary China. In Y. Guo (Ed.), *Local Elites in Post-Mao China* (pp. 17-38). London: Routledge.

Ahlers, A.L., & Shen, Y. (2018). 中国城市大气污染治理的政策与行动 (Policies and actions for air pollution control in Chinese cities). In Z. Liu, & Hansen, M.H. (Eds.), 仰望窗外的天空——中外科学家对话空气环境与治理 (*A Window on the Sky: Chinese and Foreign Scholars Discuss the Atmospheric Environment and Its Governance*) (pp. 145-154). Hangzhou: Zhejiang University Press.

Ahlers, A.L., & Hansen, M.H. (2017). Air Pollution: How Will China Win its Self-Declared War Against it? In Eva Sternfeld (Ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Environmental Policy in China* (pp. 83-96). London: Routledge.

Ahlers, A.L. (2014). Lokales Regieren und administrative Interessenvermittlung in China (Local governance and administrative interest mediation in China). In H. Heinelt (Ed.), *Modernes Regieren in China* (Modern government in China) (pp. 89-115). Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Schubert, G., & Ahlers, A.L. (2013). 作为战略性群体的县乡干部。基于三个县推进社会主义新农村建设的分析 (County and township cadres as a strategic group: An analysis of three counties' implementation of the construction of a new socialist countryside). In T. Heberer, G. Schubert, & X. Yang (Eds.), "主动"的地方政治 ("Active" local politics) (pp. 171-193). Beijing: Central Compilation and Translation Press. [Translation of a revised version of Schubert and Ahlers, 2012, *The China Journal*].

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Ahlers, A.L., & Schubert, G. (2010). 新农村建设的政策实施绩效。对浙江省庆元县的印象 (The Consequences of implementing the policy of constructing a new socialist countryside. Impressions from Qingyuan County in Zhejiang Province). In S. Chen (Ed.), 后金融危机的政府与市场 (Government and market in the era after the global financial crisis) (pp. 261-279). Beijing: China Social Science Press.

Ahlers, A.L. (2006). Environmental Mediation. In S. Laohasiriwong, & M.C. Ang Ming-Chee (Eds.), *Natural Resources Related Conflict Management in Southeast Asia* (pp. 223-239). Khon Kaen: Siriphan Press.

Policy papers, working papers, and other grey literature

Ahlers, A.L., Budian, X., & Mao, Y. (forthcoming 2026). Whither Global Science: US Steps Back, China Steps Up, Europe Steps In? *Observations: Short Papers on Science and Society in China and the World*. [peer reviewed]

Ahlers, A.L. (2025). Trilaterale Perspektive: Trumps Angriff auf die Wissenschaft, Chinas Gelegenheit und Europas Aufgabe (Trilateral perspective: Trump's attack on science, China's opportunity, and Europe's task). *Forschung & Lehre*, 8, 36-39. https://www.forschung-und-lehre.de/heftarchiv/ausgabe-8/25

Ahlers, A.L., Hennings, J., & Schmidt, F. (2025). Internationalisation: Perspectives From German Academia [revised and translated version of Ahlers, Hennings, & Schmidt (2023)]. *Junge Akademie: Discussion Paper*. https://www.diejungeakademie.de/media/pages/publikationen/internationalisierung-im-fokus/083055dfa8-1759403450/dja_debattenbeitrag_internationalisierung-im-fokus_a5_eng.pdf

Ahlers, Anna L. (2025). Kan Trumps krig mot vitenskap fremskynder Kinas fremvekst som en global vitenskapsleder? (Can Trump's war on science accelerate China's rise as a global science leader?). In: Sending, Ole Jacob (ed.), *Trump 2.0 og internasjonal politikk* (Trump 2.0 and international politics), Oslo: Norwegian Centre for Geopolitics, pp. 94-97. https://www.nupi.no/nyheter/trump-2.0-og-internasjonal-politikk

Ahlers, Anna L. (2025). Balancing Research Security and Openness (Letter). *Issues in Science and Technology, 41*(2). https://issues.org/balancing-research-security-openness-shih-wagner-forum/

Ahlers, A.L., Hennings, J., & Schmidt, F. (2023). Internationalisierung im Fokus: Innenansichten aus dem deutschen Wissenschaftssystem (Focus on internationalization: Inside views from the German science system). *Junge Akademie: Debattenbeitrag*. https://www.diejungeakademie.de/de/publikationen/internationalisierung-im-fokus

Ahlers, A.L., Schimank, U., & Schreiterer, U. (2023). Gefährdungen der Wissenschaftsfreiheit aus internationalen Verflechtungen – Institutionalisiertes Monitoring erforderlich (Threats to academic freedom via international interdependencies - Institutionalized monitoring is required). *Denkanstöße – Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 14*. file:///Users/alahlers/Downloads/BBAW_Denkanstoesse_14_2023.pdf

Ahlers, A.L. (2022). The Future of Global Science Relations (Letter). *Issues in Science and Technology, 39*(1). https://issues.org/scientific-collaboration-china-zhang-forum/

Ahlers, A.L. (2022). Contextualizing and Conceptualizing Debates about Academic Freedom in Europe. *TraFo Blog for Transregional Research: Academic Freedom*, April 28. https://trafo.hypotheses.org/36096

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Ahlers, A.L. (2022). Cosmic Time – On Breaks and Continuities. The melancholic fate of early modern Chinese science. In Junge Akademie (Ed.), *One Day, One Day at a Time: Essay-Calendar* (pp. 382-385). Berlin: K. Verlag.

Ahlers, A.L., & Heberer, T. (2021). Auf Augenhöhe? Wissenschaftskooperationen mit der VR China. *Forschung & Lehre,* 9, 740-742. https://www.forschung-und-lehre.de/politik/kooperation-auf-augenhoehe-4031

Ahlers, A.L., & Heberer, T. (2021). More Exchange at Eye-Level: European Research Cooperation with the People's Republic of China. *Global Cooperation Research. A Quarterly Magazine,* 2, 19-23.

Sagild, R.Å., & Ahlers, A.L. (2019). Working for Harmony and Innovation? Political Inclusion of Diversified Elites via the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. *FIW Working Paper*, 10, University of Bonn. https://www.fiw.uni-bonn.de/medien/publikationen/pdf/working-paper/fiw-working-paper-no-10.pdf [peer reviewed]

Ahlers, A.L., & Stichweh, R. (2017). The Bipolarity of Democracy and Authoritarianism: Value Patterns, Inclusion Roles and Forms of Internal Differentiation of Political Systems. *FIW Working Paper*, 9, University of Bonn. https://www.fiw.uni-bonn.de/medien/publikationen/pdf/working-paper/fiw-working-paper-no-9.pdf [peer reviewed]

Ahlers, A.L., & Stepan, M. (2016). Local Politics in Times of Political Centralisation: Top-level Design and Local-level Paralysis. In S. Heilmann, & M. Stepan (Eds.), *China's Core Executive: Policies, Structures and Processes Under Xi Jinping* (34-39). Berlin: MERICS Paper on China 1. https://merics.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/MPOC_ChinasCoreExecutive_web.pdf

Ahlers, A.L., & Yu, J. (2016). "What Does Xi Jinping's Top-Down Leadership Mean for Innovation in China?" In Asia Society – New York (Ed.), *ChinaFile Conversation*, October 26. http://www.chinafile.com/conversation/what-does-xi-jinpings-top-down-leadership-mean-innovation-china

Ahlers, A.L. (2014). Kommunalpolitik in China. Warum wir chinesische Politik erst verstehen, wenn wir auch die lokale Ebene in den Blick nehmen (Local affairs in China: Why we have to take into account the local level in order to understand Chinese politics). *MERICS China Monitor,* 10. https://www.merics.org/sites/default/files/2017-09/China_Monitor_10_Kommunalpolitik_DE.pdf

Ahlers, A.L., Meissner, M., & Zhu, Y. (2013). 3. ZK Plenum der KPCh: Was bewirkt der chinesische Reformbeschluss 2013? (3rd Plenum of the CCP: What will be the effect of the Chinese reform plan 2013?). *MERICS China Monitor*, 3. https://pure.mpg.de/rest/items/item_3239740/component/file_3240434/content

Commissioned book reviews and book reviews

Ahlers, A. L. (2025). Commissioned book review: Denise Sienli van der Kamp, Clean Air at What Cost? The Rise of Blunt Force Regulation in China. *The China Quarterly*, *262*, 553-555. https://doi.org/10.1017/S030574102510074X

Ahlers, A.L. (2022). Commissioned book review: Yifei Li and Judith Shapiro, China Goes Green: Coercive Environmentalism for a Troubled Planet. *The China Quarterly, 252*, 1312-1313. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0305741022001412

Ahlers, A.L. (2022). Commissioned book review: Joshua Hill, Voting as a Rite. A History of Elections in Modern China. *Journal of Contemporary History, 57*(1), 187-189. https://doi.org/10.1177/00220094221084149e

Ahlers, A.L. (2019). Commissioned book review: Sebastian Heilman, Red Swan: How Unorthodox Policy-Making Facilitated China's Rise. *The China Review, 19*(2), 177-179. https://www.jstor.org/stable/26639662

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Ahlers, A.L. (2011). Swee-Hock, Saw and John Wong (eds), Regional Economic Development in China. *ASIEN. The German Journal on Contemporary Asia, 121*, 110-112.

Ahlers, A.L. (2011). Khai Leong Ho (ed.), Connecting and Distancing: Southeast Asia and China. *ASIEN. The German Journal on Contemporary Asia, 119*, 99-100.

Media appearances, reports, and other public dissemination activities

(Quoted) Matthews, D. (2026). China lobbies Europe to restore science ties after US Greenland threats. *Science Business,* 26 February. https://sciencebusiness.net/news/international-news/china-lobbies-europe-restore-science-ties-after-us-greenland-threats

(Interview) Weber, C. (2025). Erst Ergebnisse werden zensiert (It's the results that will get censored). *Sueddeutsche Zeitung*, 12 November. https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wissen/china-spitzenreiter-wissenschaft-technologie-li.3322896

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Ahlers, A.L., & Hansen, M.H. (2025). Kan Kina tar ledertrøya? (Can China take the lead?). *Dagsavisen*, 22 March. https://www.dagsavisen.no/debatt/kan-kina-ta-ledertroya/9741602

(Podcast) Robert K. Merton Center for Science Studies, Humboldt University Berlin (2025). *Science Works Podcast* - Anna Ahlers: "China als neue Wissenschaftsmacht – soziologische Annäherungen" [China as a new science power – sociological approaches], January 22, 2025. https://blogs.hu-berlin.de/scienceworks/2025/02/05/8-rmz-jour-fixe-china-als-neue-wissenschaftsmacht-soziologische-annaeherungen/

(Interview) Matthews, D. (2024). How European academics can set up safe research collaborations with China, together with Andrea Braun Střelcová and Stephanie Christmann-Budian. *Science Business*, 18 June. https://sciencebusiness.net/news/r-d-funding/how-european-academics-can-set-safe-research-collaborations-china

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(Quoted) Nuwer, R. (2023). Chinese Students Stay Local as Favour Falls with Study Abroad. *Nature, 620*, 11-13. https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-023-02162-y#correction-0

(Quoted) Mallapaty, S. (2023). Disgraced CRISPR-baby scientists' "publicity stunt" frustrates researchers. *Nature, 614*, 599-600. https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-023-00382-w#correction-0

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Hood, S., Braun, V., & Ahlers, A.L. (2020). (Podcast) China on the Rise. *Science Social. Conversations on History, Science, and Society.* Berlin: MPIWG. https://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/podcast/science-social-conversations-history-science-and-society

Ahlers, A.L., Hansen, M.H., & Svarverud, R. (2020). ASIA SHORTS: The Great Smog of China: An Interview with Anna L. Ahlers, Mette Halskov Hansen, and Rune Svarverud. *Education About Asia, 25*(2). https://www.asianstudies.org/publications/eaa/archives/asia-shorts-the-great-smog-of-china-an-interview-with-anna-l-ahlers-mette-halskov-hansen-and-rune-svarverud/

(Interview and research profile) Thiel, T. (2020). Chinas Wissenschaft: Der diskrete Charme der Technokratie (China's science: the discreet charm of technocracy). *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. August 26.

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(Quoted) Strømmen, K. (2014). Krever å få møte Kinas statsminister. I et hav av paraplyer ble det i dag servert et nytt krav fra demonstrantene i Hongkong: Samtaler med Li Keqiang (Asking to meet China's prime minister. From an ocean of umbrellas protesters in Hong Kong today delivered a new request: A talk with Li Keqiang). *NRK* (Norwegian broadcasting corporation). October 28. https://www.nrk.no/urix/krever-a-fa-mote-kinas-statsminister-1.12010340

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Ahlers, A.L., Feicht, R., & Zürker, M. (2007). VI. Deutsch-Chinesischer Sicherheitsdialog "Sicherheitspolitik Chinas und der EU: Vergleich und Kooperationsperspektiven" (VI. Sino-German Security Dialogue). *Friedrich Ebert Stiftung*. http://www.fes.de/aktuell/focus_europa/7/Docs/FES_Bericht_Sicherheitspolitik_Peking.pdf

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Under review/in preparation

Books

China in Global Science
Cambridge Elements – Global China series
Cambridge University Press
Submitted, under review

Science and Political Regimes in the 20th and 21st Century [working title]
Co-edited with Rudolf Stichweh; based on the "Merton Workshop", LMRG/MPIWG, March 11-13, 2024
Transcript
In preparation, submission in spring 2026

The Unlikely Science Superpower: China in the 21st Century [working title]
Princeton University Press
Commissioned proposal, in preparation

Special issues (as guest editor)

"State Capacity and the Relational Qualities of Environmental Politics" [with Yifei Li (lead), Sarah Eaton and Denise Van Der Kamp]
Environmental Politics
In preparation (greenlighted by the editorial board; submissions expected by April 2026)

"Toward Resilient China-Europe Science and Higher Education Cooperation under Geopolitical Challenges" [with Gaoming Zheng (lead), Yuzhuo Cai and Wenqin Shen]
Journal of Asian Public Policy
In preparation (greenlighted by the editorial board; submissions expected by May/June 2026)

Book chapters

"Political Inclusion in Contemporary China: Role Diversification Under Hard Authoritarianism". In R. Stichweh (Ed.), *Democratic and Authoritarian Political Systems in 21st Century World Society. Vol. II.: Empirical Cases in Different Regions.* Bielefeld: Transcript.
In preparation

Publication output of research group under my leadership (external listing)

Complete list (currently 180 entries, including my own publications since 2020) available at:
https://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/research/LMRG-china-science [see "Publications (in Pure)"]