

SAR's Support for Practitioners at Risk

While SAR's work arranging temporary positions for at-risk individuals focuses on scholars and academic researchers, it has always included on a case-by-case basis other individuals targeted for their ideas: journalists, writers, democracy and human rights advocates, lawyers, and artists, or "practitioners at risk." Given the growing threats against defenders of democracy and human rights in a climate of shrinking civic space worldwide, SAR has embarked on a new pilot program, Practitioners at Risk, to explore university support for these individuals.



[Learn more](#) about the first practitioner, Ahmad Noorani, an investigative journalist, hosted through this program at Alfred Friendly Press Partners at the University of Missouri. SAR invites the participation of universities, colleges, research centers, associations, societies, and think tanks to join an affinity group SAR is coordinating to discuss this work further. While no prior hosting experience is required, SAR especially invites the participation of existing programs with experience hosting temporary visits by practitioners at risk. If you are interested, please reach out to Shreya Bahara, Program Officer at shreya.bahara@nyu.edu.

Remembering Dr. Riad Ismat



We were saddened to learn of the passing of SAR alumni scholar Dr. Riad Ismat in May due to complications of COVID-19. Dr. Ismat was a scholar from Syria whose work focused on theatre and Middle Eastern arts and literature. Also a former Minister of Culture, Dr. Ismat was a prolific and award-winning writer, authoring dozens of short stories, books of criticism, television scripts, and plays. Among his more recent publications is his 2019 [Writers, Artists and the Arab Spring](#) with Palgrave Macmillan, which explores "the foresight of prominent Middle Eastern authors and artists who anticipated the Arab Spring." After relocating from Syria due to the conflict, he held positions at North Central College and Northwestern University, arranged by our partners IIE-SRF, and later held additional posts at Northwestern and Columbia College Chicago. Dr. Ismat was a regular participant in the SAR Speaker Series, having conducted speaking engagements at University of Arkansas Fayetteville, Marquette University, Pacific University, Western Illinois University, and Benedictine University, among others.

In all of his work, Dr. Ismat was focused on storytelling that urged continued awareness of the ongoing Syrian conflict, and, in his own words, was aimed at "bridging the gap between cultures, combining Arab heritage with a modern approach, and advocating humanitarian values of liberalism, democracy, pluralism and human rights, while condemning totalitarianism that represses the freedom of expression." The SAR team remembers Dr. Ismat as one of the most creative scholars with whom we have worked and a kind individual who touched the lives of many. We send our deepest condolences to Dr. Ismat's family, friends and community. Please see the moving tribute by Dr. Ismat's colleagues at Northwestern University [here](#).

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Scholars of the Month

SAR scholars are at-risk higher education professionals that exemplify the pursuit of academic freedom, freedom of expression, and university values. If your institution is interested in hosting a SAR scholar, please email apply.scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu.



A Scholar of Sociology from Afghanistan

This scholar has a longstanding career as a researcher on gender and refugee populations. He has several years of experience working at universities and non-profit organizations in Afghanistan. He has published numerous academic articles in his field and is currently expanding his research on refugee integration in Europe with a focus on male gender identities. He reports risk of harassment, surveillance, and threats of violence in Afghanistan and seeks research opportunities in Europe beginning in January 2021. (Afghanistan 543)



A Scholar of Business and Management from Turkey

This scholar specializes in organizational behavior and health with a particular focus on the banking industry. He has several years of university-level teaching and research experience at universities in Turkey and the United States. He has a robust publication profile with numerous articles in refereed journals, most recently on topics including job satisfaction and self-management. He reports facing risk of arrest, harassment, and loss of position in Turkey and seeks research and/or teaching opportunities in North America beginning immediately. (Turkey 1252)

[All Scholars Seeking Assistance »](#)

New Volunteer Proofreader Initiative and Call for Volunteers



As the SAR Network continues to expand and grow, SAR continually strives to provide a wide range of support to scholars as they (re)establish their academic careers in exile. To strengthen our efforts to support scholars for the longer-term, SAR is pleased to announce the Volunteer Proofreader Initiative, a proofreading program committed to advancing the academic job search capacity and trajectory of SAR scholars.

SAR invites interested individuals to participate in the new initiative by offering professional, individualized edits and suggestions to CVs, cover letters, teaching statements, and other materials relevant to a SAR scholar's academic job search. Your contributions – in the form of technical edits and/or discipline-specific feedback -- will help not only address scholars' immediate proofreading needs but also provide long-term support on the fundamental aspects of the job application process.

We welcome all expressions of interest from members or affiliates of the SAR Network, alumni scholars, or those new to SAR. We are particularly eager to work with volunteers who have experience in academia and/or on academic hiring committees. Depending on one's professional or academic background, a volunteer may be asked to provide discipline-based edits and other academically relevant suggestions to scholars. Volunteers can expect one request per semester (a one- to two-hour commitment, with a two-week turnaround for requests), which can be adjusted depending on availability. The program will be coordinated by a SAR staff member who will serve as a liaison between the proofreader and scholar, available to address questions and concerns. **We welcome all expressions of interest by September 15, 2020** with the aim to offer this service to scholars shortly thereafter.

For further information on volunteer qualifications, expectations, and details on how to join, please visit the [SAR website](#). If you have additional questions, please email Madoché Bozier, Protection Services Program Associate, madochee.bozier@nyu.edu.

Invite a SAR Scholar to Your Campus!

Scholars at Risk presents the Virtual Speaker Series as an opportunity for institutions to bring to campus via videoconference one or more SAR scholars. During these events, SAR scholars share insights on academic freedom based on their unique perspectives and may discuss topics ranging from their experiences on SAR campuses, the importance of their academic work, and how being under threat has impacted their academic careers.



The Virtual Speaker Series is an expansion of the Vivian G. Prins SAR Speaker Series that educates campus communities and the public about threats to academic freedom and attacks on scholars. University and college participation in the series helps strengthen the SAR Network while highlighting the institution's commitment to defend academic freedom worldwide. SAR staff works closely with our members throughout the planning and selection process, including identifying suitable SAR scholars for a tailored Speaker Series. An online event might feature a lecture by a SAR scholar or a panel including the scholar, and might be broadcast to a class or to the public at a remote university event.

[Learn More»](#)

Events



Free Online Course: "Dangerous Questions: Why Academic Freedom Matters" | August 24, 2020 | Online

Are some questions too dangerous to ask? What happens to scholars and students who ask those questions? How can you contribute to strengthening core higher education values, such as academic freedom? These are among the questions we will discuss in "Dangerous Questions: Why Academic Freedom Matters," a free online course created by the Academic Refuge project.

[Read More»](#)



Inspireurope Outreach Workshop | September 30, 2020 | Thessaloniki, Greece

The first Inspireurope outreach workshop in Greece will be hosted by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) on Wednesday, September 30th and Thursday, October 1st 2020.

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Connect with Us



Scholars at Risk is an independent not-for-profit corporation, hosted at New York University. Our international network of institutions and individuals shares a mission to protect threatened scholars, promote academic freedom, and prevent attacks on higher education communities around the world.

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