

AFGHANISTAN BULLETIN

Dear SAR members & friends,

We remain heartened by the extraordinary response of our network members, partners, foundations and donors, government officers, and so many individuals working on behalf of at-risk Afghans. Thank you all!

The situation remains difficult, with incomplete and changing information about key questions, most especially about exit and entry pathways for those still in Afghanistan or in transit. That said, **we are making progress**. We continue to receive offers of help from institutions and sponsors, some candidates have gotten out of Afghanistan, and we have begun circulating lists of candidates to institutions that have indicated a willingness and capacity to help. These efforts will grow over the coming weeks.

Below please find a full list of updates on SAR and partner activities, available resources, calls for help, and opportunities to share and get involved. And we invite you to share with us what you know, what you can offer, and what you need, by email to scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu, subject line: "Afghanistan: [describe your issue]."

As we said in our first bulletin, Afghanistan's future is not lost so long as we support Afghanistan's scholars, teachers, and students; lawyers and judges; civil society leaders and activists; writers and journalists; musicians and artists. They are Afghanistan's future, and we are so grateful to be working together with you to help them.

Thank you for all you are doing,

Rob Quinn
Executive Director

1. HEIs offering help

Thus far over 200 network institutions have indicated their willingness to host one or more suitable at-risk scholars or practitioners from Afghanistan, with more than 50% offering full or partial support. **Thank you all!**

SAR staff have begun sharing lists of candidates on a rolling basis with institutions that have indicated a willingness to host. This work involves matching individual candidate profiles (e.g. area or work, language, family, geographic considerations) with institutional expertise and capacity (including available funding). These efforts will grow to more institutions over the coming weeks, as we process the many pending and incoming applications for assistance (see 2. below) and as exit/entry opportunities clarify (see 3. below). It will take time and persistence to turn the outpouring of good intentions into actual opportunities for individual Afghans, and we appreciate your patience and understanding.

If your institution has not yet indicated your willingness to host at-risk Afghans, please complete the [interest form here](#). (Early in the crisis, SAR surveyed network member institutions asking them to pledge to host suitable individuals and to cover the costs of visits on their own, if at all possible. We estimate these to be in the range of USD \$50,000 to \$90,000, or €40,000 to €75,000 euro depending on the individual, duration, host country, and terms of the visit. We also invited institutions unsure about hosting or the availability of funds to let SAR know of their interest, so that SAR staff might then work to assist in filling whatever gaps may be necessary. SAR staff will work with campus representatives to identify a suitable candidate for each opportunity.)

If your institution can offer other assistance or expertise, beyond hosting, including housing, language instruction, visa and immigration advice, or other services that may be of benefit to at-risk Afghans, please email us at scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu, subject line: "Afghanistan assistance: [type of assistance]".

2. Applications for assistance

SAR staff continue to process a very high volume of requests for help from Afghanistan. Over the last four weeks, we have received more than 900 applications and referrals (compared with 491 in all of the 2019-20 academic year worldwide), of which at least 500 appear likely candidates for SAR assistance (with the remainder mostly students or members of the general public). Nearly 30% of candidates processed to date identify as female.

In response, we have:

- Employed even greater flexibility with our criteria for consideration (beyond our already flexible understandings of "scholar" and "practitioner") in an attempt to assist as many at-risk Afghans as possible, while continuing to focus on our core mission.
- Instituted an emergency triage system aimed at identifying candidates for priority review, exit/entry assistance (where possible), and placement (discussed below).
- Established an expedited application review for all Afghan applications, to speed production of candidate profiles for sharing with institutions that have signaled their willingness to host (discussed below).
- Compiled lists of candidates not qualified or well-suited for campus hosting, and will attempt to refer these individuals to other organizations, services, or opportunities that may be better suited to their needs.
- Continued to process applications and requests for assistance from scholars and practitioners from countries beyond Afghanistan. We welcome interest from institutions in hosting these scholars also.

If you know of at-risk Afghan scholars or practitioners you believe would qualify for SAR assistance, please refer them to the application at <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/get-help/> (nominators may complete the form for individuals unable to do so safely), or email information to apply.scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu.

Links to additional resources for at-risk Afghan are available on the SAR website at <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/resources-for-at-risk-individuals-from-afghanistan/>.

NOTE ABOUT SECURITY: The situation in Afghanistan is still unfolding and dangerous. SAR urges anyone working to assist at-risk Afghans to keep in mind personal and information security concerns. SAR recommends whenever practical using encrypted communications (e.g. Signal, WhatsApp with disappearing messages, etc.) in place of general email. If contacting persons still in Afghanistan, exercise caution about what information is requested or shared, especially information which might expose their location or affiliation with US or other foreign nationals. If sharing candidate information with SAR or within your institution, including candidate profiles provided by SAR, for purposes of evaluation for hosting or other opportunities, please treat it as confidential employment-related information and limit access to those necessary to make a final determination on assistance. Additional digital security resources are available [here](#). For questions or concerns about security, contact SAR at apply.scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu.

3. Exit/Entry

SAR continues to engage with partners and government offices to identify suitable exit/entry pathways for at-risk Afghans seeking to take up opportunities at higher education institutions in Europe, North America, and beyond. We will provide information on such pathways in future bulletins as these develop. SAR also remains engaged in public advocacy urging the continuation of exit/entry efforts for all at-risk Afghans who are unable to live and work safely in the country.

To date, we have:

- Pressed US government officials to ease restrictions on the J (visiting researcher/scholar) visas and other similar US non-immigrant visa categories. Similar efforts are in process in Europe.
- Joined over 50 human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, [calling for an investigation](#) into the situation in Afghanistan at the upcoming 48th regular session of the UN Human Rights Council.
- Assembled lists and travel documents of priority cases and channelled these to persons and groups in the event that flights or other travel options become available.
- Issued a [letter to the US administration](#) urging them to extend the evacuation and make other necessary adjustments to entry/exit policies to facilitate relocations. **Thank you to the more than 3,600 institutions and individuals who endorsed the letter.**
- Organized an [appeal to European governments and EU institutions](#) urging similar action and pressing for a dedicated EU fellowship scheme and other dedicated funding streams. **Thank you to the more than 70 institutions that endorsed the appeal.**
- Co-signed a [letter from leading US human rights and refugee groups](#) to President Biden with the same main requests.

Exit/entry efforts will continue for weeks, months, or longer. SAR appreciates the understanding and patience of institutions eager to support at-risk Afghans that it may take some time before many individuals are able to travel and take up generous offers of assistance (see 4. below).

SAR also maintains an **emergency fund** for small grants to at-risk Afghans accepted for placement at a hosting institution or those assisting them (generally \$500 to \$5,000, approximately €400 to €4,000) with costs of eventual relocation and resettlement. For information on such assistance email countryresponse.scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu, subject line "Emergency Fund request: [summary description]".

4. Afghans Seeking Hosts

As discussed above, we have established an expedited application review for all Afghan applications to speed production of candidate profiles for sharing with institutions.

SAR staff have begun sharing lists of candidates on a rolling basis with institutions that have indicated a willingness to host. The rolling distribution (vs. blanket distribution to all institutions at once) is intended to avoid duplication (multiple institutions investing time in the same candidate), maintain candidate confidentiality (as much as possible), and facilitate successful placements as quickly as possible by taking into account individual candidate profiles (e.g. area or work, language, family, geographic considerations) and institutional expertise and capacity (including location and available funding).

These efforts will grow to more institutions over the coming weeks, as we process the many pending and incoming applications for assistance.

However, most candidates are still in Afghanistan. A lucky few (<15%) may be in transit or temporarily at a point of first arrival outside the country. For candidates still in Afghanistan, a match with a willing institution and a concrete employment or study offer may be helpful as we work to identify possible exit/entry pathways. For all candidates, it will take time and persistence to arrange their arrivals at willing host institutions. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

NOTE ABOUT TIMING: With the situation in Afghanistan still very fluid, it is difficult to predict how many qualifying individuals may be able to exit, when, or to where. What is clear is the need for support, as soon as possible upon their exit and arrival, to mitigate the disruption to their lives and careers. SAR appreciates the understanding and patience of institutions eager to support at-risk Afghans, that it may take some time before many individuals are able to travel and take up their offers of assistance. SAR will continue to provide updates in each subsequent Afghanistan Bulletin.

If your institution is interested in hosting one or more at-risk Afghans, and you have not already done so, please complete the [survey here](#).

5. Funding

SAR is grateful to the many institutions, leaders, administrators, faculty, and staff that have responded already with offers to fund visits by at-risk Afghans, in full or in part, or to look for internal funding. These efforts are vital, and will make an enormous contribution to our successful joint response to the crisis. But the opportunity and scale of need are too much for any one institution, or even for the higher education sector alone. Foundation and government resources will be vital, especially in the beginning, especially for the most vulnerable.

SAR is deeply grateful to the **Henry Luce Foundation** and the **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation** for their recent emergency grants to SAR for our response to the crisis. These timely awards have allowed SAR to scale up our efforts to assist as many scholars and civil society actors from Afghanistan as possible over the coming weeks and months. SAR also continues to reach out to other **foundations and government sources** to encourage the allocation of substantial funds to support scholarships, fellowships, and jobs for displaced Afghans, including to supplement campus sources of support, and to encourage hosting opportunities at institutions in countries in the region for many candidates who may be unable to travel or might prefer to remain closer to home. SAR welcomes suggestions for such sources of funds and invites conversations with interested funders by email at scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu, subject line: "Afghanistan funding". **As such funds become available, SAR will share, in future Afghanistan Bulletins, information on how institutions might apply for such support.** SAR also invites introduction and conversations with corporate and private donors interested in supporting at-risk Afghans and in securing their legacy as a defender of a generation of talented, courageous Afghans, men and especially women, who literally put their lives on the line for the freedom to think, question, and share ideas. To explore such support, email SAR at scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu.

SAR is grateful to the **US National Endowment for Democracy** and the **Mellon Foundation** for increased support for SAR's **emergency fund** for small grants to at-risk Afghans or those assisting them (generally \$500 to \$5,000, or approximately €400 to €4,000) to help cover such costs as eventual relocation and resettlement. For information on such assistance email countryresponse.scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu, subject line "Emergency Fund request: [summary description]".

6. Visa / arrival issues

Information on visas, refugee and parole processing, temporary and long-term immigration programs, and other possible avenues for at-risk Afghans leaving Afghanistan, for the US and other countries, remains limited and unclear. SAR is working with partners to clarify these issues and will share information, as available, in future Afghanistan Bulletins and [here on our website](#). SAR invites individuals or groups with expertise and other information on these matters to email us at: scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu, subject line: "Afghanistan: Visa/arrival information."

International: Descriptions of various visas and pathways for those relocating to the **US, Canada, and UK** is at: <https://www.icmc.net/2021/08/17/information-on-resettlement-of-afghan-refugees-and-internally-displaced-persons/>. Information on relocation programmes in **Denmark, Belgium, and Canada** is available at: <https://help.unhcr.org/afghanistan/relocation/>.

United States: Information for Afghans under the Afghan Special Immigrant Visa program, the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program, and other pathways for at-risk Afghans to the United States is available at: www.state.gov/afghanistan-inquiries/.

Ireland: Per the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, any person who wishes to make an application for a visa to join a family member already living in Ireland must do so at: <https://www.visas.inis.gov.ie/avats/OnlineHome.aspx>. For more information: <https://www.irishimmigration.ie/coming-to-join-family-in-ireland/>. Further updates will be posted at: <https://www.irishimmigration.ie/category/updates-and-announcements/>.

Germany: Information for Afghan people entitled to protection is available at: <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/konsularisches/afg?openAccordionItem=ten>.

United Kingdom: Afghan relocations and assistance policy and eligibility criteria are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>. Information on the Afghan citizens' resettlement scheme is at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>.

7. Post-arrival

While the majority of our energies are currently directed to processing requests for assistance and matching candidates with hosts, we remind ourselves that arrival on campus is only the beginning of a visit. Resources to help scholars/visitors and hosts make the most of their time together are available on the SAR website. These include:

- [SAR's Scholar Handbook](#) (advice for scholar's for a successful visit)
- [SAR How to Host Handbook](#) (advice for host campuses)
- [SAR Speaker Series Handbook](#) (advice on organizing events)
- [Academic Opportunities Newsletter](#) (monthly job and fellowship postings)
- [External Opportunities directory](#) (fellowship & other around the world)
- [Online Scholar Training Modules](#) (advice on making the most of a visit)
- [Resources to Support Mental Health and Wellbeing](#)
- [Webinars and other resources for employers and at-risk scholars](#) developed by the EU-funded [Inspireurope](#) project, coordinated by Scholars at Risk Europe.

SAR invites sharing of additional resources, or suggestions for future SAR resources, trainings, or activities by email to scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu, subject line: "Afghanistan Bulletin: Resources."

8. Events, media, other resources

SAR welcomes suggestions of events, media, or other resources to include in future 'Afghanistan Bulletins.' Email scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu, subject line: "Afghanistan Bulletin: Resources."

- On **Thursday, 30 September 2021**, Inspireurope will host an information session for higher education institutions and other employers across Europe on supporting scholars from Afghanistan. Learn more here: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/news-events/supporting-afghanists-scholars-information-higher-education-institutions-europe>

- **"Our Universities Can Save Afghanistan's Best and Brightest,"** Allida Black & Robert Quinn, Newsweek, Opinion, 17 September 2021.
- On 9 September 2021, the Presidents' Alliance held a briefing, "Higher Ed Afghan Response and Advocacy: Action & Information Briefing." The event was co-sponsored by UARRM, The New University in Exile, World Education Services, Scholars at Risk, Backpack, and IIE. Watch the recording here: <https://www.presidentsalliance.org/higher-ed-afghan-response-and-advocacy-action-information-briefing/>

- "Brown, RISD join colleges vowing to help scholars from Afghanistan," Edward Fitzpatrick, Boston Globe, 10 September 2021: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2021/09/10/metro/brown-risd-join-colleges-vowing-help-scholars-afghanistan/>
- Every Campus a Refugee (ECAR) invites US colleges and universities to provide campus housing to refugee families and to support them in their resettlement by partnering with the local refugee resettlement agency. To learn more visit: <http://everycampusarefugee.net/>

9. Misc.

Job openings: SAR is seeking additional temporary and extended-term staff to assist with our work on Afghanistan. For information visit the [career opportunities](#) page on the SAR website, or [subscribe](#) to receive notices of future positions.

Podcast: SAR's [Free to Think podcast](#) recently reissued an earlier conversation on Afghanistan. You can listen or subscribe to the podcast on your favorite platform.

10. Urgent appeal for Afghanistan

It's not too late. SAR members, partners, and staff are doing everything we can to help Afghanistan's scholars, students, practitioners, civil society leaders, and activists, especially women and ethnic and religious minorities. For the better part of twenty years they have worked for a new, rights-respecting, forward-looking, knowledge-based Afghanistan. They dedicated their lives to the values of openness and tolerance. These are not the values of the Taliban, so their lives are now at risk.

Timely action can still make an enormous difference. Your gift today can help.

Connect with Us

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