Getting Involved

Promoting academic freedom through protection, advocacy, and learning.

SCHOLARS AT RISK
NETWORK
protection advocacy learning

The Network at a Glance

SCHOLARS AT RISK (SAR) is an international network of institutions, associations, and individuals whose collective mission is to protect scholars and promote academic freedom.

560+	40+	1,600+	300+	$32M
network institutions	countries	scholars assisted	host institutions	in support

SAR Sections

The SAR Network is increasingly organized into national sections—geographic groupings of higher education institutions organized for the specific purpose of participating in SAR-related activities.

- SAR Australia
- SAR Canada
- SAR Denmark
- SAR Finland
- SAR Flanders
- SAR Germany
- SAR Greece
- SAR Ireland
- SAR Italy
- SAR Netherlands
- SAR Norway
- SAR Slovakia
- SAR Sweden
- SAR Switzerland
- SAR United States

SAR Europe

SAR's European office is hosted by Maynooth University, Ireland. SAR Europe works with SAR sections and partners in Europe to strengthen support for scholars and to promote academic freedom. To this end, SAR Europe coordinates the 10-partner EU-funded Inspireurope project, and convenes the European Committee for Academic Freedom Advocacy.

Network Membership

Membership is open to accredited higher education institutions and educational associations worldwide. SAR member organizations make a commitment to academic freedom, designate a SAR representative, establish a SAR committee, and contribute an annual membership subscription. Members are encouraged to participate in activities across SAR's three programmatic areas: protection, advocacy, and learning.

PROTECTION

SAR protects scholars suffering grave threats to their lives, liberty, and well-being by arranging temporary research and teaching positions, and by providing advisory and referral services.

ADVOCACY

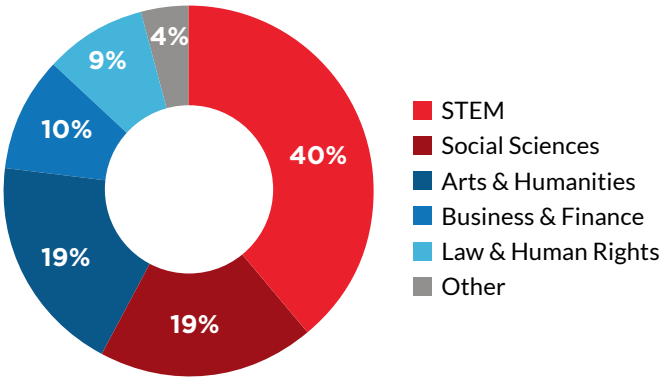
SAR has established several initiatives to identify, document and take action in response to attacks on scholars, students and their higher education communities through reporting, monitoring, seminars, and clinics.

LEARNING

SAR convenes higher education community members and the public to discuss academic freedom and develop proactive practices that strengthen the university space through projects, workshops, courses, dialogues, and trainings.

Protection

In the 2020–2021 academic year, SAR received over 1,000 applications and arranged academic placements for 147 scholars from a variety of disciplines (see figure, right). A majority of these scholars came from Afghanistan, Turkey, Yemen, Myanmar, and Ethiopia. From May to November 2021, SAR received over 1,300 applications from scholars and practitioners from Afghanistan alone. SAR also received many requests from across the Middle East and North Africa, Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia.



How SAR Helps

STEP 1

SCHOLAR APPLIES
(or is referred)

STEP 2

Initial Evaluation

SAR evaluates a scholar's situation to determine how the organization and network can best help them.

STEP 3

Scholar Hosting

The scholar may be hosted for a SAR-arranged visiting academic position at a network institution or an external SAR-supported opportunity.

STEP 4

Advice & Assistance

The scholar receives advice and assistance on relocation, integration adjustment, job skills, and more from SAR and the host institution.

Transition

The scholar receives support from SAR to transition to longer-term opportunities.

SCHOLAR STORY

Dr. Hanadi Ibrahim
SYRIA

Dr. Ibrahim completed her PhD in analytical chemistry in France in 2010 and was eager to return to Syria. "I strive to make a difference in the world through scientific research," Ibrahim said. She wanted to help her country and people with her expertise in early diagnosis and treatment of diseases. But when she arrived in February 2011, Syria was on the brink of civil war. Along with fellow scholar-activists, Ibrahim released a video in which she called on fellow academics to join a general strike and participate in civil disobedience aimed at stopping the regime's assault on the Syrian people. The regime labeled her a traitor, accused her of treason, and confiscated her property. She reached out to SAR, which helped arrange positions at Western University and Simon Fraser University, where she continues to research and publish while hoping for an end to the conflict in Syria.

SCHOLAR STORY

Dr. Semahagn Abebe
ETHIOPIA

Dr. Adebe is a former public prosecutor and lecturer in criminal and administrative law in Ethiopia, with expertise in transitional justice and human rights. In 2006, after discussing conditions of unlawful imprisonment, torture, and corruption in Ethiopia with his class, he was accused of criticizing the government and sympathizing with opposition leaders. He was put under surveillance and directed to stop discussing Ethiopia's legal system. Unable to continue his work, he fled the country, eventually completing his PhD at the University of Gottingen. Fearing further persecution should he return to Ethiopia, SAR helped arrange positions at the National University of Ireland, Galway, McGill University, the University of Connecticut, and Endicott College. He remains a dedicated human rights advocate, and frequently speaks at public events on African studies and human rights.

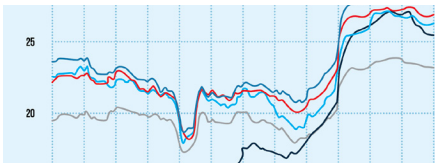
Advocacy

Scholars in Prison Project Campaigns

SAR raises awareness of and garners support for scholars and students in prison or facing other threats.

Student Advocacy Seminars & Legal Clinics

Students research and conduct advocacy related to imprisoned scholars and attacks on higher education.



Academic Freedom Monitoring Project

Researchers document and analyze attacks on higher education, including physical violence, imprisonment, prosecution, and restrictions on travel.

Reports & Publications

SAR reports and publications, such as *Free to Think*, encourage international dialogue on higher education values and related issues.

Learning

Speaker Series

Members invite SAR scholars to campus to share their academic work and stories of courage and perseverance.

Workshops

SAR members co-organize workshops and trainings for faculty, researchers, staff, and students on Promoting Higher Education Values.

Conferences & Events

At SAR's biennial Global Congress, members come together and share best practices for protecting scholars and promoting academic freedom.

Projects

SAR promotes academic freedom through a podcast, resources to support academic freedom trainings, a free online course, the Academic Freedom Index, and more.

BECOME A MEMBER

Colleges, universities, and other institutional members of the SAR Network have a variety of opportunities to make a difference in protecting threatened scholars and strengthening the higher education space.

www.scholarsatrisk.org/join

GIVE TODAY

Your participation is vital to our work around the world! Consider supporting SAR by making a monthly contribution. For more information about giving, contact:

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