SCHOLARS AT RISK NETWORK
protection advocacy learning

20 YEARS

Defending the human rights of scholars and protecting academic freedom worldwide

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# SAR Seeks Support for Yemeni Scholars

Scholars at Risk (SAR) invites higher education institutions in the network to offer Yemeni scholars and practitioners placements at their institutions, and in doing so, to support Yemen's academic future. The protracted conflict in Yemen has caused a humanitarian catastrophe, and with it, a devastated higher education system that has left students without the means to pursue their education, and scholars and university personnel without a basic income. Thousands have sought refuge abroad only to find precarious circumstances and discrimination preventing them from reestablishing their lives and reengaging academically. SAR recognizes the imperative need to stand in solidarity with the Yemeni community of scholars and to emphasize that they have neither been forgotten, nor overlooked.

Since the outbreak of the conflict in 2014, hundreds of Yemeni scholars have applied to SAR for assistance, putting Yemen behind only Afghanistan and Turkey in number of applicants. In addition to severe physical and economic insecurity, scholars report that the war has undermined their rights to education, academic freedom, and institutional autonomy. SAR's *Free to Think 2020* reports that the higher education community has been disproportionately affected by the conflict as warring parties have commandeered many academic institutions for military and recruitment purposes, turning these facilities into targets and centers for indoctrination.

Despite these challenges, Yemeni scholars remain dedicated academics, determined to engage in the international higher education community and to support the development of the next generation of students, scholars, and practitioners. Dr. Abdulghani Muthanna, a scholar of international and comparative education, generously shares his experience as an at-risk scholar and describes the opportunities SAR and IIE-SRF placements have afforded him in continuing his work.

Currently, SAR is considering over 80 applications for assistance from Yemen, and seeking placements for 10 scholars, a number of whom are noted below. We urge

member institutions within the SAR network to consider hosting scholars like Dr. Muthanna on your campus, and to contact SAR's Protection Services at scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu. For more information on the state of Yemen's higher education system, read *Free to Think 2020* and its translations.

**See more on Yemen in Free to Think 2020 »**

# Reflections From Hosts: Whitman College

Whitman is a small liberal arts college in Walla Walla, Washington in the US. Our mission is to provide an academically rigorous education to an exclusively undergraduate student body. Since Fall 2017, Whitman has hosted three SAR scholars in: Politics and Race & Ethnics Studies, Politics and History, and Economics and Global Studies.

Whitman's involvement with SAR has had two key outcomes for our students and faculty. First, it has enabled students to experience unique course offerings—specifically with a global focus—taught by scholars with a deep and direct knowledge of these subjects often outside the traditional Whitman curriculum. Second, it has introduced to the faculty the important work that SAR does and has widened perspectives of the impact of global scholars. [...]

The process of hosting SAR scholars has been a learning experience for us at Whitman, one that is ongoing. One key to our success was recognizing that we could use existing endowed lectureships to fund scholars. However, there are demands on these funds from multiple departments and programs, so we must seek additional avenues to host scholars in the future. Another factor has been identifying departments and programs that are interested in hosting.

The faculty who founded the SAR committee at Whitman made a firm commitment that our primary focus would be to host scholars, and that if we did not make a dedicated attempt to host a scholar every year that we were not doing our job. That commitment continues to this day.

**Read Dr. Timothy Machonkin's full reflection from Whitman »**

# Scholars Seeking Hosts

*SAR scholars are at-risk higher education professionals who 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 Biotechnology**

This scholar specializes in aquatic ecology and entomology. Currently, he is studying biological control strategies for citrus pest management. This scholar also has numerous years of teaching and research experience at universities in Asia, the Middle East, and the United States. He is seeking research and/or teaching opportunities in the United States beginning immediately. (Yemen 540)

**A Scholar of Computer Science**

This scholar specializes in cloud computing and in the Internet of Things. In his dissertation, he developed a model to optimize task scheduling in cloud computing. He has experience instructing courses in artificial intelligence, cloud computing, Internet of Things (IoT), and programming, among others. This scholar is seeking teaching and/or research opportunities in a safe country beginning immediately. (Yemen 556)

**A Scholar of Agricultural Studies**

This scholar specializes in plant breeding, nuclear-induced mutation techniques, and crop improvements. In his recent work, he developed two mutations of bread wheat that are resistant to rust diseases and identified drought-tolerant wheat genotypes by using carbon isotope discrimination. This scholar is seeking teaching and/or research opportunities in a safe country beginning immediately. (Yemen 573)

**A Scholar of Veterinary Science**

This junior scholar of veterinary science focuses

**A Scholar of Microbiological and Biochemical Pharmacy**

**A Scholar of Engineering**

This scholar specializes in analyzing risk factors in

on research background pathology and immunology in livestock. His forthcoming research will focus on pathology in animals native to the Horn of Africa. He is seeking teaching and/or research opportunities in a safe country beginning immediately. (Yemen 638)

This scholar specializes in peptide drug development and cancer immunotherapy. In his dissertation, he studied the anti-tumor activities of immune checkpoint antagonist peptides. He has instructed courses in microbiology, virology, immunology, and pathology, among others. This scholar is seeking teaching and/or research opportunities in a safe country beginning immediately. (Yemen 648)

energy sector construction projects. He has instructed courses in risk management, construction management and site investigation, and building and environmental engineering management, among others. He is seeking teaching and/or research opportunities in a safe country beginning immediately. (Yemen 668)

**All Scholars Seeking Assistance »**

# Take Action To Support Egyptian Scholars

This month marks the first anniversary of Ahmed Samir Santawy's arrest and the fourth postponement of Patrick George Zaki's trial by the Emergency State Security Court. Both postgraduate students have been arbitrarily arrested and charged by Egyptian authorities in apparent retaliation for the nonviolent exercise of their rights to freedom of expression and academic freedom.

At Central European University, Austria, Mr. Santawy is pursuing a master's degree in sociology and social anthropology, with a focus on women's reproductive rights in Egypt. He has been in prison since February 1, 2021 and is serving a four-year prison sentence, without the right to appeal. At the University of Bologna, Italy, Mr. Zaki is pursuing an Erasmus Mundus master's degree in women and gender studies. Mr. Zaki was arrested on February 7, 2020, and held in pretrial detention for 19 months. Currently out of detention, he awaits his trial which was recently postponed until April 6.

Join SAR in calling on Egyptian authorities to take any available actions to secure the unconditional release of both Mr. Santawy and Mr. Zaki and allow their travels to Austria and Italy, respectively, so they may resume their master's programs.

Take action »

Podcast: Listen to Mai El-Sadany on academic freedom in Egypt »

# Restore Autonomy at Boğaziçi University

On February 2, 2022, Scholars at Risk issued a letter to Turkish state and higher education officials, including President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in response to the arbitrary dismissal of three democratically appointed deans from Boğaziçi University.

In the letter, SAR expresses serious concern over a pattern of escalating violations of academic freedom and institutional autonomy at one of Turkey's most prestigious universities, a pattern that began with President Erdoğan's unilateral appointment of a political ally as rector in January 2021. Students and faculty have suffered violent force, arrests, prosecutions, and disciplinary actions for protesting the controversial rector appointment and demanding university autonomy. SAR urges Turkish government and higher education officials to reverse wrongful disciplinary actions against students and faculty, refrain from actions intended to punish or restrict peaceful expressive activity, and restore the democratic norms and traditions of the rector and dean appointment processes of Turkey's public universities.

Read More »

Podcast: Can Candan and Zeynep Gambetti of Boğaziçi University »

# Inclusion of Researchers at Risk

SAR welcomes the recent publication of the European Commission's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Guidelines for Inclusion of Researchers at Risk. The guidelines were developed with input from the Inspireurope project, a 10-partner EU-funded project led by SAR Europe at Maynooth University, to coordinate support in Europe for researchers at risk. The guidelines reaffirm academic freedom and freedom of scientific research as core principles of the European Union, and encourage MSCA applicants and beneficiaries to facilitate the participation of researchers at risk in MSCA programmes. The proposed measures relate to the dissemination, recruitment, and selection of researchers, and career guidance and training of recruited researchers. The guidelines were disseminated by the European Commission to MSCA national contact points in the 27 EU member states. Although focused on the MSCA, the guidelines may well be used more widely across the higher education community and

lead to more tailored support for a greater number of at-risk scholars across a wider range of countries.

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# News & Events

**SAR United States How to Host Workshop | Feb 11, 2022**

The SAR United States section will host a workshop on Friday, February 11 at 11 AM-1:30 PM EST to offer guidance to SAR member hosts on the basics of hosting scholars, discuss questions that may arise before, during, and after placement, and brainstorm together about the ways in which the network can best support scholars in the United States. Network members outside of the United States are also welcome to attend.

Read more »

**Call for Abstracts: 2022-23 Knowledge Forum | Deadline: March 15, 2022**

Queen's University Faculty of Education is excited to announce a call for abstracts for the 2022-23 Knowledge Forum. The topic is Education at Risk/Education as a Human Right. In this issue we invite those from both the Scholars at Risk network and the Queen's education community to share their stories, research, and ideas about education at risk. This issue will share experiences from the Scholars at Risk community and explore how we support, navigate, struggle, and triumph when our ability to research, teach, and learn are under threat.

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**Inspireurope Regional Outreach Workshop, Southern Europe | March 31, 2022**

The Inspireurope project's Regional Outreach Workshop, Southern Europe will be held on March 31, 2022 at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece (venue: Aristotle University Research Dissemination Center-KEDEA). The workshop aims to: (i) increase

awareness with key stakeholders in Greece and surrounding countries; (ii) provide opportunities to get involved in activities to support researchers at risk; and (iii) discuss effective ways to support researchers at risk both in academic and non-academic sectors.

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### Inspireurope Stakeholder Forum 2022 | May 10-11, 2022

The third and final Inspireurope Stakeholder Forum will take place in Berlin on May 10-11, 2022. It will be hosted by Inspireurope partner; the Alexander Von Humboldt foundation and will review progress and lessons learnt on the Inspireurope project with key stakeholders from across Europe.

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### SAR Italy - International Conference | June 22 - 24, 2022

Save the date for this international conference which will take place in Padua, Italy on the 800th anniversary of the University of Padua.

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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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