

Solidarity with the people of Ukraine and Ukrainian higher education

Scholars at Risk stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine and with people around the world, [including in Russia](#), in condemning the ongoing acts of aggression against the Ukrainian people and territory by the agents and armed forces of the Russian Federation.

We recognize the urgent need at the national and multinational level for humanitarian assistance, security interventions, and diplomacy to end the violence and to protect the rights, safety and well-being of the Ukrainian population. We applaud those measures already begun, particularly by bordering states, to assist evacuees and persons still in Ukraine, and join calls for increased solidarity and actions from across the global community.

Within SAR's area of work, we anticipate the need for concrete measures to protect Ukraine's higher education institutions, scholars, and students. Although the scale of need may not be clear for weeks, or even months, we stand ready to assist, including by arranging temporary positions for as many scholars displaced from or otherwise unable to work safely in Ukraine as possible, as well as scholars in Russia who may face retaliation for their opposition to the aggression or support for Ukrainian colleagues. Essential to these efforts will be rapid and robust financial support for such temporary positions from European governments, EU institutions, and governments around the world. SAR supports proposals from the [EU-funded Inspireurope initiative](#), among others, for a [dedicated EU fellowship scheme for researchers at risk](#), including researchers and academics from Ukraine, as well as support for established and new [national support programmes](#), and invites additional government, philanthropic, or private sector initiatives.

SAR recognizes and supports [recent actions and proposals](#) to facilitate, extend, and/or expedite immigration, visa, and/or work authorization processes in bordering countries and beyond for all evacuees from Ukraine, including scholars, to allow them the time and flexibility to identify and take up positions at host institutions in Europe and elsewhere. SAR calls on authorities to include within such actions appropriate support for Ukrainian scholars and students outside of Ukraine, as well as [international students](#) and scholars displaced from or still inside the country.

Together with partner organizations working in the area of student rights, SAR supports calls for [national programs for students at risk](#), modeled on existing initiatives in Norway, Germany, and Poland, as well as other urgent responses for students from Ukraine to enable them to continue their studies in safety.

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SAR appreciates the intention by some governments and institutions to disassociate from formal cooperation with agents, government agencies, and the armed forces of the Russian Federation. Suspension of such contacts and activities is warranted to allow assessments aimed at ensuring that the activities do not constitute support for acts of aggression. However, as to the higher education sector in particular, SAR strongly cautions against overbroad or indiscriminate suspension or elimination of academic contacts and activities that may unnecessarily impair the academic freedom or well-being of scholars in or from Russia, who may themselves face retaliation for their opposition to the aggression or their support for Ukrainian colleagues, and who may be vital academic freedom allies in the longer term.

SAR commends the many SAR network member institutions, SAR sections, partner networks, and partner organizations ready to offer support to colleagues from Ukraine, including temporary research, teaching, and study positions, and those otherwise standing with the people of Ukraine. SAR is available to support network member institutions receiving inquiries and pleas for help from Ukrainian colleagues. As the situation develops, SAR anticipates referring appropriate candidates to network members for possible hosting opportunities. SAR welcomes communications and suggestions as to the challenges, needs, and types of support activities members may need or may be able to offer, and will work to develop programming to address these as the situation develops.

Scholars at Risk's mission is to protect threatened scholars and to promote academic freedom. We do this because scholars and academic freedom are essential to quality research, teaching, and discourse. But we do this also because they are essential to democratically-legitimate, rights-respecting societies; societies where we "[leave our guns at the door](#)" and embrace reason, evidence, and persuasion to resolve conflicts. The ongoing aggression against Ukraine and its population is a bald rejection of this principle, and as such a complete rejection of the core values of higher education that have been recognized by the international community, including in the [Rome 2020 Communiqué of Ministers of the European Higher Education Area](#), where Russia and Ukraine are members.

Solidarity in defense of this principle is essential. Essential for Ukraine. Essential for us all. SAR stands with the people of Ukraine. We will work with the many SAR network member institutions, SAR sections, partner networks, and partner organizations in support of our colleagues at risk. And we invite suggestions or offers of material, financial, or other assistance for these efforts by contacting us at scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu.



Robert Quinn
Executive Director
March 2, 2022

This statement on ‘Solidarity with the people of Ukraine and Ukrainian higher education’ is endorsed by the following SAR sections and partner networks (as of March 2, 2022):

SCHOLARS AT RISK NETWORK  AUSTRALIA SECTION **SCHOLARS AT RISK** NETWORK  CANADA SECTION

SCHOLARS AT RISK NETWORK  DENMARK SECTION **SCHOLARS AT RISK** NETWORK  EUROPE **SCHOLARS AT RISK** NETWORK  FINLAND SECTION

SCHOLARS AT RISK FLANDERS SECTION **SCHOLARS AT RISK** NETWORK  GERMANY SECTION

SCHOLARS AT RISK NETWORK  GREECE SECTION **SCHOLARS AT RISK** NETWORK  IRELAND SECTION **SCHOLARS AT RISK** NETWORK  ITALY SECTION

SCHOLARS AT RISK NETWORK  NORWAY SECTION **SCHOLARS AT RISK** NETWORK  SWEDEN SECTION

SCHOLARS AT RISK NETWORK  SWITZERLAND SECTION **SCHOLARS AT RISK** NETWORK  UNITED STATES

