

HOW CAN ACADEMIC INDIVIDUALS HELP AT-RISK
AFGHAN SCHOLARS AND STUDENTS?

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CHALLENGES OF HELPING AS AN INDIVIDUAL IN A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

- Lack of knowledge and understanding of the complexities of the situation.
- Collaborating with well-intended yet wrong people. The result could be dangerous and life-threatening for those stuck in Afghanistan.
- The psychological and physical toll that such a humanitarian crisis could impose on individuals who are trying to help is beyond measures.
- Each case comes with its own difficulties and complications. They need to be handled by different institutional bodies that match their needs.
- Security risks, death threats, etc.
- The important of collaborating with relevant organizations with resources and knowledge.

HOW TO HELP?

- **Educate yourself:** Ways of helping at-risk scholars and students
Read [SAR](#) Handbook or similar resources to know how to proceed and to avoid giving wrong instructions and hopes to the at-risk people.
- **Identify your cases:**
 - Who and where are they? Every case is different.
 - Ask for a CV and help them with editing the CV.
 - Share their CVs with potential sponsors. Help them with uploading their information on relevant websites, i.e. SAR
- **Keep them anonymous, protect their identities.**
- **Do not** give empty promises or hopes.

COLLABORATE WITH YOUR OR OTHER ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

- Reach out to your departments, Provost Office, Global Humanities Office, or colleagues with experience and/knowledge of the region and urge them to become a hosting member at SAR and other organizations. [Crucial for the future of at-risk scholars]
- Urge them to create research/teaching/visiting positions for at-risk scholars of different fields.
- Form a cross-departmental/cross-institutional coalition to collectively work on creating such positions. It is always more efficient to work collectively than alone.

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- Provide the potential sponsors with as much information as you can about your identified case but keep the identity of the case anonymous, unless your sponsor guarantees to help them.
- Keep your identified case updated about the admission process without promising anything until the decision is finalized. [help them prepare for their interview if they have any].
- Remind the institutional bodies that these people are not in a normal situation. They are emotionally and physically in a vulnerable position for giving such interviews.

TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN FORMING ACADEMIC COLLECTIVES

- Form collectives with the help of colleagues and graduate students to edit, re-write, upload CVs and filling applications on behalf of at-risk scholars and students.
- Remember many at-risk people never filled an application form. So referring them to an organization or application form to do it themselves doesn't exactly help them.
- Collective fundraising to waive application or tuition fees of at-risk students.

REMINDING THE OBVIOUS

- Remind your institutions (in case they seem to be detached from the reality of this humanitarian crisis) to revisit their western academic standards when it comes to host scholars and students who lived under 20 years of occupation by the Western foreign forces.
- Disqualifying an Afghan scholar or student based on their poor command of English language is to reinforce the discourse of occupation and dehumanization of a population that was ignored and later abandoned in the hands of extremists after twenty years.
- Remind your institution that these people did not make the choice to leave their home and livelihood behind. And that it is OUR duty to help with their integration.