

Frequently Asked Questions

A university campaign to support Afghans at risk

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About

Who are the partners and participants in this campaign?

The Human Rights Center at UC Berkeley Law, [Human Rights Institute at San Jose State University](#), and Afghan Student Association at UC Berkeley have joined together to launch the [Afghanistan Emergency Response crowdfunding campaign](#). We are working to help journalists, lawyers, activists, and other academics to evacuate and travel, apply for visas, and resettle with financial support at UC Berkeley or other U.S. campuses.

Who are you helping?

Our immediate goal is to assist several Afghans at risk with evacuating to safety and ultimately finding refuge at UC Berkeley or on another US campus. We are

Contacts: [Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley](#) 2224 Piedmont Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94720, humanrights.berkeley.edu, 510.642.0965, [@HRCBerkeley](#)
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specifically working to support a women's rights activist and journalist with five children; a law school dean with two small children; a female judge; an individual through the Scholars at Risk program; a fixer and interpreter from Amnesty International; among others. We're also supporting other campuses that seek to sponsor those who flee.

What are other ways I can help?

You can begin by sharing [our crowdfunding campaign](#) to your friends, family members, colleagues, co-workers, and peers. Additionally, you can complete our [brief public intake form](#) to let us know what services or forms of support you can provide and we will reach out to you accordingly. Afghans who arrive in the U.S. will need assistance as they settle into a new country. This can range from monetary donations, housing, access to household items, transportation, translation, and other types of support through their transition.

Resources for Afghans

Which organizations are offering legal advice or assistance at this time?

Human Rights First is an independent advocacy and action organization focused on human rights. This organization is currently accepting referrals of Afghans who are seeking legal assistance in the U.S. regardless of whether they are currently located in the U.S. or abroad. Human Rights First hopes to secure pro bono legal assistance for those who [complete this Google Form](#). For details on how to complete this form, please look at APPENDIX I at the end of this document (disclaimer: the suggested language in APPENDIX I for the questions is for information only, and it is not intended to provide legal advice). If you need to evacuate from Afghanistan, [complete this Google Form](#).

Pangea is a respected legal humanitarian orgs in the Bay Area coordinating a project to pair volunteer legal workers with Afghans seeking humanitarian parole

into the United States. "We've already paired nearly 200 volunteers with hundreds of people needing support, but still have many more cases to assign and need more volunteers. "Time is of the essence because we understand that the U.S. may cease evacuations on 8/31. Pangea is welcoming individual donations to cover the USCIS filing fees of humanitarian parole applications for Afghans. We are simultaneously volunteering our time to process the applications. The goal is to raise about \$575/application for 100-300 individuals. We are accepting individual payments through Venmo (donations under \$1000): @Saamia-Haqiq. ***Please do not use the words "Afghan" or "Afghanistan" in your Venmo transaction. Pangea's [website](#) (donations over \$1000): <https://www.pangealegal.org/donate>. Please click on the button that says "Afghan Humanitarian Parole Donation."

Pangea will process and reimburse the \$575 humanitarian parole fee to each sponsor once the application has been filed. Extra funds will go to a single organization that is doing Afghan refugee resettlement work. For more information about how to file for humanitarian parole for Afghan evacuees, see this training video and step-by-step guide:

<https://adepgress.org/resources/afghanistan-humanitarian-parole/>

If you know a paralegal, law student, legal representative, or lawyer who would like to [help volunteer to provide pro se support to Afghans and their sponsors \(will not formally represent clients\), please use this form.](#)

International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP) is an organization which develops and enforces legal and human rights for refugees and displaced persons. IRAP has compiled [these resources for Afghans about their immigration options](#). If you are an Afghan and looking for immigration options, please visit [this website](#). IRAP also recommends [this database of free immigration legal services](#).

The Berkeley Law Afghanistan Project is providing pro bono legal assistance. You can contact the team at afghanistanproject@law.berkeley.edu.

Are there other resources with information on evacuation from Afghanistan?

Yes, there are three key resources to help with evacuation. First, this thorough [web page](#) provides links to organizations who are trying to evacuate Afghans, check on their visa applications, and apply for visa applications in and outside of the U.S. Second, you can [complete this Google Form](#) by Human Rights First to evacuate you and your family. Third, you can [complete this Google Form](#) by the Office of Representative Malinowski, or contact the following Congresspeople for further assistance: Congresswoman Barbara Lee (Lee.AfghanistanInquiries@mail.house.gov), Senator Tom Cotton (evac@cotton.senate.gov), Representative Andy Kim (RepKimEvac@mail.house.gov), or Senator Jon Ossoff (Afg-evac@ossoff.senate.gov).

Are there other resources with information on relocation, resettlement, or sponsorships?

Yes, there are many helpful resources that have been created addressing these key issues. [This first resource by Afghan War News addresses](#) all these questions. Additionally, [the Tri-Valley Muslim Community Refugee Response Team](#) can assist Afghans arriving in the U.S. with various needs ranging from transportation, helping families with paperworks, applying for jobs, and teaching English. [USAHello](#) is also providing information on the various visas available to Afghans, evacuation assistance, and how to protect your digital identity available in English, Pashto, and Dari. Last but not least, the [Scholars at Risk Network has put together a series of resources](#) for at-risk individuals from Afghanistan.

What organizations are helping Afghan refugees and new arrivals in the San Francisco Bay Area?

Jewish Family and Children's Services of San Francisco: 415-449-3700, www.jfcs.org/

UC Berkeley is offering free confidential counseling and referrals to faculty, staff, visiting scholars, and postdocs through [Be Well at Work - Employee Assistance](#). To schedule an appointment with an Employee Assistance counselor, please contact (510) 643-7754 or email employeeassistance@berkeley.edu.

I have family members, friends, friends of friends, or colleagues who are scholars, students, professors, and academic researchers. Where should they seek assistance?

The Scholars at Risk program arranges short-term, temporary research and teaching opportunities for threatened scholars. Individuals in the scholar category can [apply for assistance here](#). Scholars at Risk also has [resources](#) on visa and transit, immigration options, and digital security protocols that may be helpful.

The Institute of International Education's Platform for Education in Emergencies Response has a [database of educational opportunities](#) for students who are displaced and refugees. Check their database regularly to view positions to apply for.

I have family members, friends, friends of friends, or colleagues who are in Afghanistan. What resource can I immediately share with them?

The UC Davis Backpack is available in [English, Dari, and Farsi](#) for students, human rights activists, professionals, and others to safely store their documents and materials on cloud-based servers administered and protected by UC Davis.

You can also share this App called [Ehtesab](#) which provides verified and real-time reports about security, traffic reports, and city service alerts in areas important to you such as your hometown, school, or place of work. You can learn more about this App in [English](#), [Dari](#), or [Pashto](#).

Volunteering Universities to Help

How can universities, law schools, or research programs help right now?

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[Human Rights Institute, San Jose State University](#),

To volunteer your campus, please complete [this brief Google form](#).

We are collecting information from campuses and research organizations that can host the more than 50 scholars who have either reached out directly or been guided to us by colleagues and friends. The list is growing daily. These academics, professionals, and students are in need of a university placement on the J-1 Visa.

If you are interested in supporting a scholar, please reach out to your campus representatives, centers, international office, and department chairs who might be willing to provide a letter of invitation and support the visa process for a Visiting Scholar or for a researcher or student through a cultural exchange program, internship, or other training program.

For further information on [exchange programs and requirements](#), visit this website and view an example of the [University of Missouri's Template Letter of Invitation](#) to share with your university officials.

Get the process started by filling out [this brief Google form](#), and we will reach out to you as soon as possible.

My school can host an academic, but we have not secured funding to help, what should we do?

If you are at a smaller or under-resourced academic institution and think you could interest administrators in hosting a Visiting Scholar, please contact us by filling out the [Google form](#).

We are already on our way to raising external funds to sponsor Visiting Scholar positions, so please let us know if you know of a potential host program in need of financial sponsorship by completing [this form](#).

Scholars at Risk can also provide additional grants to at-risk Afghans or those assisting them to help cover costs of relocation and resettlement. For information on such assistance email countryresponse.scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu, subject line "Emergency Fund request: [summary description]".

How can I help my university or college host someone through the Visiting Scholar program?

Many colleges and universities are choosing to work directly with the wonderful [Scholars at Risk](#) network. We will host at least one scholar through SAR as part of this Berkeley/San Jose State campaign.

In parallel, our human rights contacts have a list of Afghan journalists and scholars at risk who would like to be hosted by a university—many of whom are still in Afghanistan. Please reach out if you would like to be matched with a scholar. **Due to the crisis and difficulty of evacuating all Afghans who need to flee the country, the process of matching and bringing scholars is fluid and requires flexibility and patience on the part of the hosts.** Please keep this in mind.

Below are the steps we have followed to raise funds and host scholars:

Fundraising campaigns:

- Contact your university's Chancellor, provost, or development office to request matching funds for a crowdfunding campaign to host an Afghan scholar at risk. Request support in fundraising and for all fees associated with bringing Visiting Scholars or crowdfunding to be waived. Discuss how this institutional support should be conveyed in any public documents or through your campaign.
- If possible, launch a crowdfunding campaign through your college or university's platform. If a crowdfunding campaign isn't an option, you can launch a fundraising campaign with a specific deadline. Be sure to update your community on the progress of the campaign.
- In all public documents, put safety for Afghans first: consider photos that do not show anyone currently at risk and do not share details of someone's story, even if you think it might be compelling for fundraising.
- Do consider sharing a story or story ***without identifiable information*** of the scholar(s) you may host.

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- Follow up with the donors and invite them to share with their friends and communities.
- If your university has offered a match, update donors on the progress toward that matching grant.
- Work with your development office to ensure that the fund terms for the gifts are appropriate and that you have flexibility for supporting the scholars with stipends, travel, and other needs.
- We have been budgeting approximately \$40,000 to \$60,000 per scholar for one year, depending upon their dependents and needs.

Hosting Scholars:

- Start with your college or university's International Office that runs or interfaces with your Visiting Scholar program. If you're at a large university, it's likely that each department or school/college will have its own Visiting Scholar program. Meet with someone from the International Office and/or Visiting Scholar program about bringing an Afghan scholar to your campus.
- The Visiting Scholar program and International Office will work with you to prepare the documents required for a J-1 Visa. See below for the steps toward the J-1 visa.
- Make sure you have a faculty member who is willing to be the point person to host a scholar.
- **Every Afghan who attempts to evacuate to safety or to find a home at a college or university has a different set of legal needs and should meet with a pro-bono attorney to assess their unique situation.** Family members may be eligible for other forms of immigration relief. For example, they may need to seek [Parole Status](#) instead of the J-1 visa. University hosts for J-1 Exchange Visitors are strongly encouraged to connect Afghan scholars with pro bono immigration attorneys who can evaluate and advise based on current conditions and the unique circumstances of each scholar and their family.
- If you are not going through the Scholars at Risk network (a national program) and have a direct connection with a scholar who is either in

Afghanistan or in a third country, work with your university to secure the documents and information you will need.

- The first step in the J-1 visa process is to prepare the DS-2019, a document that will ultimately be presented at a US embassy on the path to securing a J-1 visa for the scholar (and J-2 visas for the scholars dependents).
- The DS-2019 can be prepared in advance through email or WhatsApp correspondence, but Afghans will need to receive the actual DS-2019 document outside of Afghanistan (due to the fact that the US Embassy in Afghanistan is not accessible). Therefore, Afghans must be in a second country where they can safely access a US embassy in order to proceed with the J-1 visa process.
- **Here are the documents that Berkeley's office required for the DS-2019 in preparation for the J-1; however defer to your university's International or Visiting Scholar office:**
 - Copy of identification page from passport for visitor and dependents
 - English language proficiency document (use attached template)
 - CV/resume
 - Proof of funding document
 - J-1 Host Faculty Agreement
- Here is the **information you will need to prepare:**
 - Permanent address (street, city, province, country, postal code), phone number (including country code), e-mail address
 - Type of highest degree earned, month and year earned, name of institution
 - Name of employer and job title
 - Begin and end date of visiting appointment
 - Brief description of research project
 - Monthly funding amount
 - City of birth (including dependents)
 - If the country of legal permanent residence is different from the country of citizenship, please include proof of legal permanent resident status (see attached)
 - Marital status

- Emergency contact person first and last name and phone number (including country code)
- Mailing address for FedEx shipment (street, city, province, country, postal code), phone number (including country code)
- If the visitor has a valid U.S. visa in their passport, please include visa type and visa expiration date
- If the visitor (or their dependents) has been to the U.S. in J status, please include a copy of their previous DS-2019
- Anticipated date of arrival in the U.S.
- Travel plans for the next 6 months, including dates and destination
- City and country where they will apply for a visa
- FedEx chartstring for airbills

What is the J-1 Visa?

The J-1 Visa allows a foreign national to participate in teaching, lecturing, observing or consulting at post-secondary academic institutions, museums, libraries, or similar types of institutions. Professors can also conduct research unless the university sponsor disallows it. [Here is a State Department spreadsheet describing the Exchange Visitor Program Category Requirements.](#)

Most Afghan professors, scholars, journalists, and activists do not qualify for the Special Immigrant Visas (SIV). They may, however, qualify for the J-1 Visa or [Parole Status](#). Costs and fees for a J-1 are described [here](#).

Who can I contact with questions not covered in this FAQ sheet?

You may email the Human Rights Center at hrc@berkeley.edu with further questions and inquiries; please note the Center is very busy responding to this crisis and may not respond immediately or have the information you request.

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APPENDIX I
How to complete the Human Rights First google form

Contacts: [Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley](#) 2224 Piedmont Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94720, humanrights.berkeley.edu, 510.642.0965, [@HRCBerkeley](#)
[Human Rights Institute, San Jose State University,](#)

Referral to Project: Afghan Legal Assistance (PALA)

Please input information for any Afghan person seeking legal assistance in the United States (whether physically in the United States or abroad). This information will be used by Human Rights First to assist in securing pro bono legal assistance in collaboration with other pro bono legal services providers.



██████████ (not shared) [Switch account](#)



What is your full name? **Use your name as it appears on your passport**

Your answer

What is your email address? **Answer this**

Your answer

What is your phone number? **Should be your number in Afghanistan**

Your answer

What is your date of birth? **Note that the format is Month Day Year**

MM DD YYYY

If you are outside of the United States, let us know if there is someone in the U.S. we can communicate with about your situation (name and phone number).

Your answer **You may use my name and phone number (but please let me know you have done so): Alice Stokke +1.425.444.2311**

What languages do you speak fluently? **Answer this**

English

Dari

Pashto

English

Dari

Pashto

When did you last enter the United States? **If it was for UW, let me know if you need me to look this up for you. Also note the date format**

MM DD YYYY

/ /

If you are in the United States, what is your immigration status?

Humanitarian Parole

SIV (or waiting for approval of SIV status)

Lawful Permanent Resident

U.S. citizen

Other: **LEAVE THIS QUESTION BLANK**

LEAVE THIS QUESTION BLANK

MM DD YYYY

When does your current status expire (if applicable)?

If you are in the United States, have you filed an asylum application?

- Yes **LEAVE THIS QUESTION BLANK**
- No
- Unknown

If you are in the United States, have you applied for work authorization?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown **LEAVE THIS QUESTION BLANK**

If you are outside of the United States, have you filed an SIV application, a referral to P1/2 refugee status or any other U.S. immigration application?

- Yes **choose YES**
- No

Have you applied for any other immigration benefit?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown **Did you also apply for SIV or have you applied directly to a university for an F-1 or J-1 visa? If yes, check Yes, otherwise check No. If you are not sure, check "unknown"**

Do you have a spouse? **Answer this**

- No
- Yes

If yes, where is your spouse located? **Answer this**

- United States
- Afghanistan
- Other:

Do you have any children? **Answer this**

- Yes
- No

If you have a child/children, what is their current location?

Answer this

- USA
- Afghanistan
- Other:

What legal assistance do you need?

- Asylum application
- Humanitarian parole application **choose this one**
- Work permit application
- Special Immigrant Visa application
- Help for family abroad
- Other:

Do you have an attorney? **Choose No**

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Do you give Human Rights First permission to share your information with other legal services providers who may be able to assist in providing you with legal counsel? **Choose Yes**

- Yes
- No

Is there anything else you want to tell us about your situation?

You should write this up separately in Word and paste it in. I am happy to help you edit it. It should include your connection to the U.S., why you are at risk, and any specific threats you or your family has received.

Your answer