



## ACA supports the urgent appeal of Scholars at Risk to take action for Afghanistan's students, scholars, researchers, and civil society actors

25 August 2021, Brussels

The **Academic Cooperation Association (ACA)** joined the **Scholars at Risk** network and a rapidly growing number of prominent organisations – over 70 at present – in an **urgent call for action** geared towards the European governments and European Union policy-makers.

The signatories request policy-makers to take immediate action to secure the lives and careers of the many students, scholars, researchers and civil society actors that are now under imminent threat in Afghanistan, and whose situations become increasingly critical by the day.



Specifically, the supporting organisations, including ACA, call for a set of **concrete and immediate measures**:

- **Continue evacuation flights** for as long as possible so as to include scholars, students, and civil society actors who have supported the forward-looking, pluralist vision of Afghanistan that the EU, European governments, NATO partners and other international and civil society organisations embraced. **Do not end flights until all are safely out who wish to leave the country.**
- **Increase resettlement quotas** to help those in need of international protection, including researchers, scholars, and civil society actors. Ensure international protection is provided to current Afghan protection applicants through an expedited process, and prioritise and expedite family reunification applications.



- **Create expedited complementary legal pathways** for candidates who demonstrate an existing host institution, job, or sponsor, including for families, that would facilitate their arrival and earliest adjustment.
- Waive **any intent-to-return and home residency requirements that may apply to visa applications** for Afghan scholars and researchers for the foreseeable future.
- Establish a **dedicated EU fellowship scheme** for researchers and scholars at-risk, including scholars, students, and civil society actors from Afghanistan, especially women and ethnic and religious minorities, to undertake fellowships, lectureships, researcher positions, or temporary academic positions at European higher education institutions.
- Establish **dedicated national fellowships** for researchers and scholars at-risk, including scholars, students, and civil society actors from Afghanistan, similar to existing national fellowship programmes run by the PAUSE programme in France and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's Philipp Schwartz Initiative in Germany.

[Read the full statement](#) on the Scholars At Risk's website. If you wish to support the appeal, contact SAR and further advocate towards the EU and national level policy makers.

ACA and its member organisations remain strong advocates for and supporters of students and scholars at-risk. In recent years, ACA has led two important projects – [GREET](#) and [CARE](#) – striving to facilitate the integration of students and scholars with a refugee background into the European higher education and research landscapes, as well as into the European research labour market. ACA's members run many programmes designed to directly assist students and scholars at-risk in different parts of the world.