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# SAFE HAVENS AND KNOWLEDGE NETWORKS IN CANADA

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## FINAL REPORT

Presented by

**Megan Graham, PhD,**  
**Carleton University**

In consultation with

**Norah Vollmer,**  
**Carleton University**

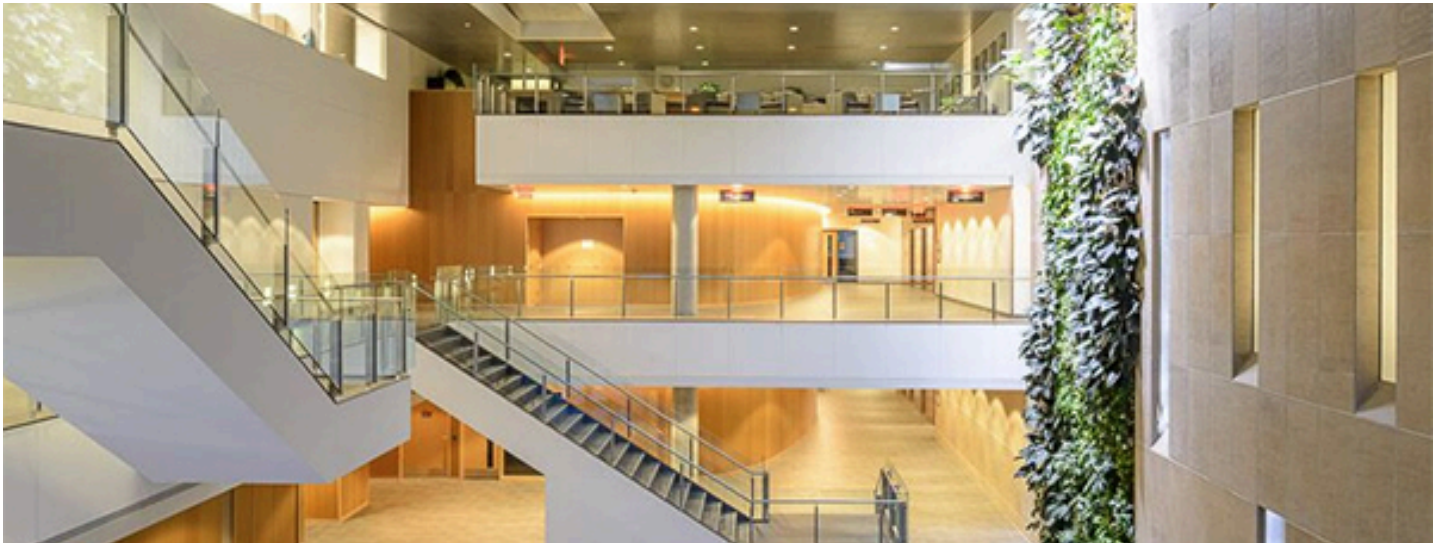


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# Executive Summary

This final report distills policy-relevant lessons from three interrelated initiatives led by Carleton University with support from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC): (1) Placement, Preservation and Perseverance Project: Afghan At-Risk Scholars, Activists and Students (PPP, 2022-2024), (2) the Academic Advancement and Career Alignment course (AACA, 2024 and 2025), and (3) The Safe Havens and Knowledge Networks in Canada Conference (May 22-23, 2025). This report informs federal and provincial policymakers, universities, and national networks on scalable approaches to supporting scholars at risk by establishing a coordinated national program in Canada. Herein, at-risk and displaced scholars refers to displaced scholars, students and human rights defenders, and may include academics, researchers, artists, journalists, scientists, and other professionals with significant expertise in their field. Due to safety and security concerns, some of these participants cannot be named in the report.



## GLOBAL CONTEXT OF CHRONIC CONFLICT AND KNOWLEDGE UNDER SIEGE

Worldwide, academic freedom faces unprecedented threats amid continuously escalating risks, authoritarian resurgence, democratic backsliding, and systemic attacks on truth and inquiry. Indicators of democracy are at 40-year lows, comparable to Cold War levels. Over 120 million people are displaced globally, the highest since WWII. Scholars and human rights defenders are among those most at risk, facing persecution for their ideas and research in their home countries.<sup>[1]</sup> Mass displacement leads to collapse of higher education and research infrastructures in origin countries, eroding institutional capacity for governance, development, and innovation. This is a humanitarian crisis and global knowledge crisis.

Scholars at Risk (SAR) programs are essential to Canada's commitments under the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) and its reputation as a human rights leader. These programs protect academic freedom (SDG 16), offer refuge to those in danger (SDG 10), promote inclusive education and knowledge preservation

(SDG 4), advance gender equality (SDG 5), and influence policy through advocacy (SDG 17). They also enrich academia by fostering diversity and collaboration. While countries like the United Kingdom (UK), France, and Germany have national frameworks for at-risk scholars, Canada still lacks a coordinated approach despite its UNSDG obligations and global standing.

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An academically free institution is one where not everybody has to have the same ideas and the same thoughts. In fact, quite the opposite. We want to see more diversity of thought, more the ability of people to express themselves in different ways, provided the climate in which that is done is a civil climate.

— The Honourable Bob Rae, P.C., C.C., O.Ont., K.C., Permanent Representative and Ambassador of Canada to United Nations in New York and President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (May 2025)

Displacement severs scholars from their networks, tools, and platforms, creating long-term deficits in global knowledge production and loss of expertise. To mitigate this loss, initiatives have been implemented to preserve knowledge networks, such as Carleton’s Placement, Preservation, and Perseverance (PPP) project which was modeled upon international examples, such as the Council for At-Risk Academics (CARA) organization in the UK, the Programme national d’accueil en urgence des scientifiques et des artistes en exil (PAUSE Program) in France, and the Philip Schwartz Initiative (PSI) hosted by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation in Germany.<sup>[2]</sup> These initiatives emphasize sustaining scholarly networks through hosting scholars, organizing conferences and collaborative research projects, and engaging through digital platforms. These strategic programs are critical for post-conflict reconstruction, democratic resilience, and Canada’s global leadership in education and innovation.<sup>[3]</sup>

At the federal level, Canadian immigration policy needs to be modified to facilitate the hosting and employment of at-risk and displaced scholars and human rights defenders. In the current context of shifting public sentiment, federal intake caps, and the pausing or closure of key programs, these gaps have widened, contributing to longer processing times, growing backlogs, and reduced settlement capacity.<sup>[4]</sup> In the past, Canada has shown strong responses to refugee crises. For example, the rapid, whole-of-government response that enabled the resettlement of 40,000 Syrian refugees in 2015<sup>[5]</sup>, the Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot (EMPP)<sup>[6]</sup>, and the Group of Five refugee sponsorship program<sup>[7]</sup> highlighted Canada’s innovative thinking in addressing chronic global refugee crises.

At the provincial level, the absence of a federal government-funded national program leaves universities to independently manage the hosting and support of scholars. In June 2012, the SAR Canada Section was launched at the University of Toronto's Massey College by the Honourable Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, then President and Vice-Chancellor of The University of Winnipeg.<sup>[8]</sup> The launch of the Canadian Section represented the culmination of several years of partnership between Canadian universities, organized under provincial legislation, and the SAR Network. SAR Canada currently has 32 university members, in seven provinces (See Appendix A for a chart of the Scholars at Risk in Canada ecosystem).



Over the past five years, Canada hosted 25 Scholar Rescue Fund fellows at 16 universities, representing 10 countries. About half specialized in STEM and half in non-STEM fields, spanning disciplines from science and health to law, arts, and social sciences. Additional scholars arrived from Bangladesh, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Hong Kong, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Ukraine. Carleton University exemplifies a successful Scholars at Risk (SAR) model, hosting 20 at-risk scholars since 2013 while supporting employment transitions and community engagement. Nationally, SAR placements are hard to quantify, but recent data shows 12 placements in 2024 and 23 in 2023. Currently, 11 scholars hold active placements, with many alumni remaining in Canada; six more await visas. An alumni survey found 62% are employed, and 82% of those work at least part-time in academia.<sup>[9]</sup>

Despite the membership in SAR Canada, individual university restrictions and structural challenges impede the successful integration and ongoing employment of at-risk scholars and mobilization of expertise. For example, academic appointments remain precarious and funding for Scholars at Risk programs in universities that provide financial support to scholars is severely limited or absent. Most displaced scholars rely on short-term fellowships or contract teaching, leaving them vulnerable to underemployment and career stagnation. Further, eligibility requirements for research funding exclude at-risk and displaced scholars from applying, making it impossible to continue research programs. Finally, integration into union agreements and adjunct hiring policies is challenging and varies widely among universities and departments, and EDI frameworks need to be revised to include displacement and migration status. As will be discussed later in this report, gendered barriers further compound difficulties for women scholars, including caregiving burdens, mental health stress, and limited access to leadership roles.

Since May 2025, Canada's immigration policy landscape has undergone a profound and accelerated transformation, driven by pressures on housing, infrastructure, and system capacity. Beginning in spring 2025, the federal government initiated major structural shifts including the elimination of job-offer points in Express Entry to combat fraud and rebalance selection criteria, the introduction of new national caps on temporary residents, and significant reductions to permanent resident admissions through 2027 (from 395,000 in 2025 to 365,000 by 2027). The enactment of the Strong Borders Act (Bill C-2) in June 2025 further marked a restrictive turn, expanding enforcement powers and limiting asylum seekers' access to hearings, triggering concerns from human rights organizations about impacts on refugee protections. Together, these measures reflect a decisive movement toward a more controlled, risk-averse immigration framework prioritizing system integrity, population management, and domestic capacity over previous growth-oriented policies.

Within this shifting environment, the trajectory of the Economic Mobility Pathways Pilot (EMPP) illustrates both the promise and precarity of refugee-inclusive immigration pathways. Early 2025 departmental plans signaled an intent to transition the EMPP into a permanent program by the end of the year, positioning it as a key mechanism for enabling skilled refugees to enter Canada through economic streams. However, on

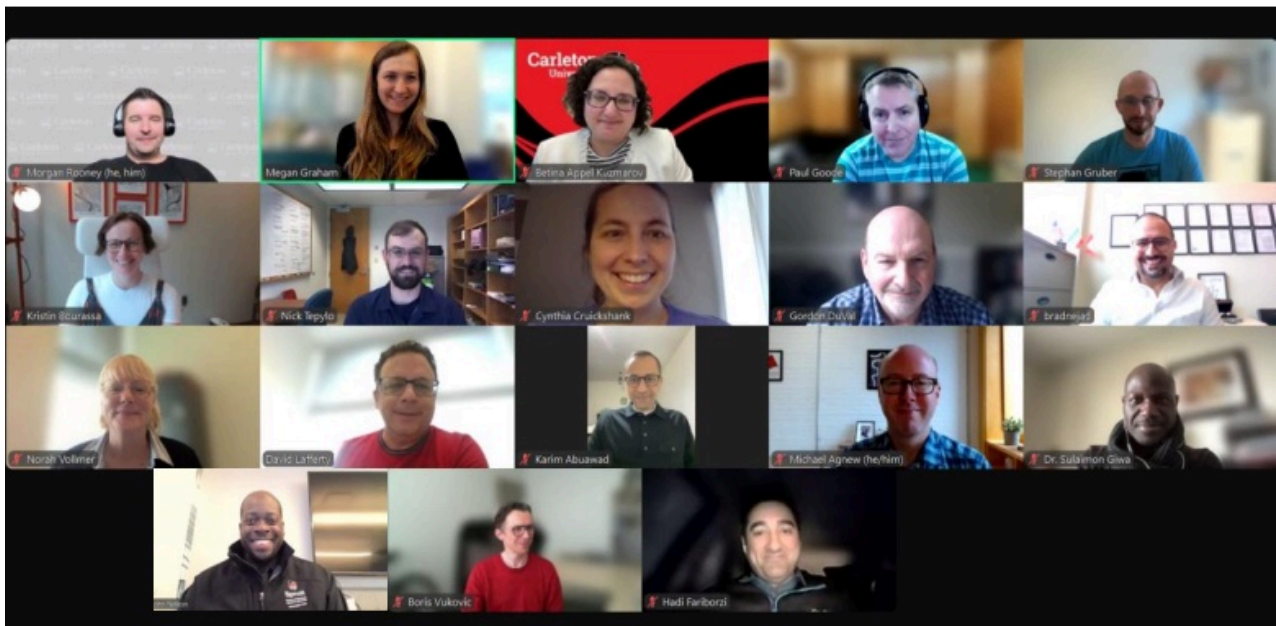
December 31, 2025, IRCC formally ended the EMPP, halting all new intakes and limiting processing to applications submitted by the cutoff date. This reversal underscores the fragility of refugee-focused mobility initiatives during periods of tightening immigration policy and heightens uncertainty for displaced scholars and other at-risk professionals seeking safety through economic pathways. The EMPP's cancellation creates a policy gap at precisely the moment when global displacement is rising and when Canada's own research ecosystem would benefit from structured, predictable mechanisms to welcome highly-skilled talent at risk.

**A coordinated national Scholars at Risk program in Canada can help shift the current responses from episodic and nationality-specific to a consistent standing policy framework aligned with humanitarian commitments and the proactive preservation of global knowledge network.**

This final report synthesizes learnings from IDRC-funded initiatives and offers multi-sectoral recommendations for policy action. These insights reflect conversations with at-risk and displaced scholars, artists, and students, international experts from programs in France, Germany, the UK, and the United States (US), Canadian university scholars, and NGOs supporting scholars at risk.

# LEARNINGS FROM THE ACADEMIC ADVANCEMENT AND CAREER ALIGNMENT (AACA) COURSE

The Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate, launched nationally in April 2025 by Carleton University's Scholars at Risk program and IDRC, builds on a 2024 pilot under the PPP project. It provides tailored training for at-risk and displaced scholars, artists, and activists to navigate Canadian academia and alternative careers. Delivered virtually in discipline-specific streams (business, science, engineering, arts, social science), the course featured experts from universities, industry, and NGOs, and was shaped by input from an advisory committee of five at-risk scholars.



A selection of presenters from the Academic Alignment and Career Advancement course (April 2025), representing Carleton University, Mount Royal University, Memorial University, and Clarkson University.

The April 2025 AACA course consisted of 10 sessions throughout the month, with typically two sessions per week. Two of the sessions had extended components with special presentations - one for a focused conversation about academic hiring in engineering, another for industry hiring in engineering, and a general session for publishing outside academia.

Participants were given a prepared syllabus with guided activities to enrich their learning before and after the session (see Appendix B for 2025 AACA Course Syllabus). Topics included academic and alt-academic career pathways, continuing education, creating academic CVs and resumes with a focus on transferable skills, introduction to creating a teaching philosophy statement for job applications,

networking, library research management, research ethics, research grants and research team composition, journal articles and publishing within and beyond academia. Special attention was paid to participants' concerns about identity and self-presentation, rebuilding networks, academic hiring practices, and ways to constructively address gaps between arrival and meaningful professional integration. Upon completion, participants were mailed certificates and sent downloadable copies through email.

Participants were recruited through the Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF), SAR Network, human rights defender programs, Canadian universities, and partner organizations such as The Royal Society of Canada. Eligibility required residence in Canada. Enrollment grew from 34 in 2024 to 63 in 2025, representing diverse disciplines and career stages from Master's graduates to senior researchers. Findings from the evaluation of the 2024 course by students in the Diploma in Program Evaluation program in School of Public Policy & Administration (SPPA)s at Carleton University<sup>[10]</sup>, and findings from the 2025 course are presented below.

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Learning to reach out to potential colleagues – even just to ask for a virtual coffee or to learn about their work – was a major shift for me. Initially, it felt uncomfortable. But I came to understand that in the Canadian academic and professional context, these kinds of informal conversations are not only welcomed but often expected.

A key skill is developing an 'elevator pitch' – a short, confident summary of who you are, what you do, and what you're looking for. As displaced academics, our stories are often complex, but having a clear and concise introduction helps build trust and clarity. Crafting a short statement about my research interests and goals helped me feel more grounded, whether at a conference, in an email, or during a casual conversation.

– AACA Advisory Committee member/ Participant of AACA 2024 pilot

## Key Contributions and Achievements:

### KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

- Achieved an 85% rating of extreme usefulness from participants for the sessions conducted.
- Enhanced participants' confidence in research methodologies and grant writing by 25%.
- Improved CV writing confidence levels from 40% to 70%.
- Received strong positive feedback for sessions on academic writing, publishing in academia and alt-academic channels, and understanding Canadian academic norms.

### NETWORKING AND INTEGRATION

- Facilitated valuable networking opportunities with Canadian academics and peers.
- Emphasized strategies for rebuilding professional networks in Canada and gaining relevant Canadian work experience.
- Addressed concerns about online safety and security, recognizing the hesitance among at-risk scholars to share content due to insecurity about their status.
- Provided guidance on maintaining a professional online presence while safeguarding privacy.
- Prioritized mentorship and supportive guidance to ensure inclusivity and integration.

### IMPACT

- Created a safe and supportive environment for scholars to pursue research and teaching.
- Enhanced comprehension of both academic and non-academic career pathways in Canada for highly skilled individuals.
- Offered a structured orientation to Canadian academic norms to expedite integration.
- Tackled issues of identity and career interruptions during interviews, especially for women scholars who encounter unique barriers to re-entry.

The program helped me understand where my experience fit in Canada and where it didn't, so I could adapt without losing my professional identity.

– AACA Course Participant

It might take a village...to help a scholar at risk restart his or her career.

– AACA Course Participant

## Key Policy Recommendations for Career Transitions:

### 1. Implement Career Transition Professional Development and Mentorship Programs at Universities:

Coordinate activities to leverage university resources to help at-risk and displaced scholars establish their professional identities in Canada; learn academic norms of publishing within and outside of academia, grant writing, and job applications; and establish proactive discipline-specific mentorship programs with faculty to help scholars immediately begin rebuilding networks and re-establish research continuity in Canada following career interruptions.

### 2. Establish Immediate Professional Connections and Research Participation:

Incentivize faculty members to hire at-risk and displaced scholars on research teams and include them in conferences and professional networking activities.

**3. Streamline and Expedite Credential Recognition:** Streamline and expedite processes for integrating scholars into Canadian academia and workforce. Federal government can expand programs like Foreign Credential Recognition (FCR) Program to include more academic and research roles, fast-track work permits and postdoctoral/teaching fellowships for displaced scholars, and fund national bridging programs. Provincial governments can standardize university hiring policies for internationally trained scholars, including recognition of foreign PhDs or professional experience and publication record, and incorporate displacement/migration status into EDI frameworks and union agreements.

**4. Influence Systemic Change in Tri-Agency and Research Granting Agencies:** Address eligibility gaps in research grant opportunities and postdoctoral fellowships. Revise requirements for highly qualified personnel (HQP) to include at-risk and displaced scholars. Additionally, a separate category of federal granting opportunities for at-risk and displaced scholars could be created.

# LEARNINGS FROM THE SAFE HAVENS AND KNOWLEDGE NETWORKS IN CANADA CONFERENCE

The Safe Havens and Knowledge Networks in Canada conference was held May 22-23, 2025, at Carleton University. The international event convened university professors, government representatives, non-governmental organizations, human rights defenders, students, funders, and civil society to identify system-level gaps and opportunities. Among the presenters were at-risk and displaced scholars and artists, project leads (Carleton) and student participants from the PPP project (UBC), and directors from IDRC (Canada), UNHCR (Canada), SAR Network (USA), Scholar Rescue Fund (USA), The Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF), Inspire Europe-Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Germany), PAUSE programme national d'accueil en urgence des scientifiques et des artistes en exil (France), TalentLift Canada (Canada), JumpStart Refugee Talent (Canada), Resilient Societies (Canada), Northpine Foundation Canada). Additionally, The Honourable Marilou McPhedran CM, Independent Manitoba Senator was in attendance and the Honorable Bob Rae, Permanent Representative and Ambassador of Canada to United Nations in New York and President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (May 2025), delivered an address virtually on academic freedom.

The two-day hybrid event had over 200 registered participants across both days. The keynote session was hosted and produced as a session on CBC Ideas with Nahlah Ayed, entitled, "Scholars at Risk: A new role for Canadian universities," which aired on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025.<sup>[1]</sup> The conference included an in-person art exhibition featuring work by two at-risk artists (one from Turkey and one from Ukraine). Conference participants were invited to attend a partner event, called Allies in Exile, organized by an exiled Afghan journalist and journalist-in-residence at Carleton University.<sup>[2]</sup> The conference program (designed by an at-risk artist) is included in Appendix C and a list of conference outputs is included in Appendix D.

The Safe Havens Conference advanced academic freedom and support for displaced scholars while fostering global knowledge networks through the dissemination of research and ideas. It aimed to:

1. **Amplify** the impact of the PPP project and ensure that its findings influence policy and practice, with a gender-responsive approach, in Canada and internationally.
2. **Establish** Canada's capacity to respond to future crises and provide gender-responsive support at-risk scholars in Canada and worldwide.
3. **Identify** a future research agenda on priorities of human rights defenders and scholars at risk, as they engage with networks within their home countries and settle in their new environments.
4. **Strengthen** knowledge systems and networks within diaspora Human Rights Defenders (HRD) and SAR communities
5. **Position** Canadian higher education institutions to advance gender-responsive democratic governance and human rights globally.

## Keynote Session: CBC IDEAS

### Knowledge Under Siege: The Role of Canadian Universities in Hosting At-Risk and Displaced Scholars (Aired on CBC June 13, 2025)



CBC Ideas producer Tom Howell and Dr. Mustafa Bahran discuss the challenges facing scholars at risk in the opening keynote session of the conference. [Photo © Conference News Team]

“ We are living in a time of deep uncertainty, where knowledge is contested, truth is ignored, facts are distorted, borders are hardened, and the very act of asking questions can carry risk.  
— Dr. Mustafa Bahran, Carleton University ”

“ It’s not a charity, it’s a smart investment — an investment in global peace, global justice and also innovation and diversity. Because when you bring a scholar here, they bring knowledge.  
— Conference participant (name withheld for safety and security), Carleton University ”

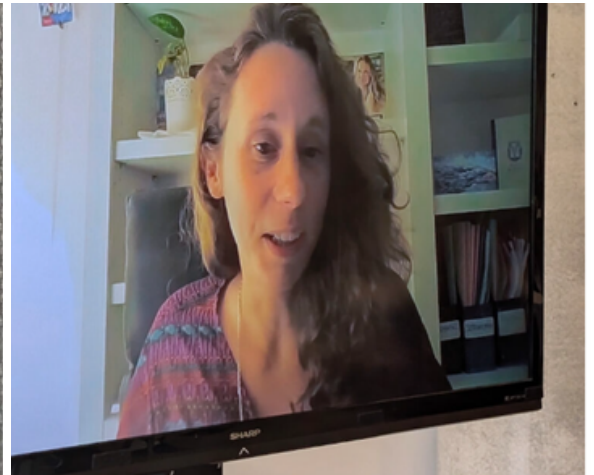


CBC producer Tom Howell listens as Carleton University political science professor James Milner discusses how global political upheaval is putting scholars at risk in many countries. [Photo © Conference News Team]

**“If [Canadian Universities] can create some pathways to transition from temporary positions to permanent positions, or maybe if they can help us to have permanent residency, it would help us a lot.... We have to think about many things. We cannot focus only on our research. You have to think about everything.”**

— Conference participant (name withheld for safety and security, Carleton University)

# Global Perspectives on National Programs for Scholars at Risk



German scholar Dr. Maïke Didero, program manager of Inspire Europe at the Berlin-based Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, and Marion Gués Lucchini (appearing via video), advocacy and international relations manager at the PAUSE Programme in France, share thoughts about how national SAR programs help protect and advocate for scholars and artists at risk. [Photo © Conference News Team]

“A government-backed program offers stability and long-term impact.... When the public authorities can be on board, it's always better. You have to prepare for crisis, and not just the visible or arising crisis that's mediatized, but also the individual cases that maybe you can find out. Visa and residence permits are not optional. It's not a side issue. It's key.

You have to support host institutions. You have to recognize, as well, that researchers are not just recipients of aid. They are future colleagues, they are mentors, innovators, they are true contributors of the society as a whole.”

– Conference Presenter (Name withheld for safety and security)



Danielle Alperin, Assistant Director of Scholar Rescue Fund (SRF) in New York, joins Carleton University's SAR Committee Chairs, Dr. Andrew Johnston and Dr. Christine Duff, and Phoebe Alpern, Program Associate for membership and university relations at Scholars at Risk Network in New York via video to discuss the benefits of a national SAR programs and international commitment to supporting at-risk scholars, artists, and activists. [Photo © Conference News Team]

# Employment Pathways to Canada for Displaced Scholars



Panelists Sandra Elgersma and Dana Wagner during a May 22 panel discussion on the challenge facing refugees and scholars at risk to secure employment in their field of expertise. [Photo © Conference News Team]



JumpStart Refugee Talent's Bassel Ramli and SAR Carleton co-chair, Dr. Christine Duff, during a May 22 panel discussion on employment pathways for scholars at risk and other refugees fleeing upheaval in their home countries. [Photo © Conference News Team]

"In the current context of diminishing opportunities, of funding cuts and other things, many eyes are on Canada and on what kind of opportunity Canada provides to the world for refugees.... It's part of changing the narrative from refugees as something you have to deal with or host, versus trying to involve people and integrate them into your labour market and into your community."

– Sandra Elgersma, Canadian representative with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

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"There are straightforward solutions for these types of things, but currently it takes time and it takes a bit of advocacy."

– Dana Wagner, Founder and Director, TalentLift Canada

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"Six months would have to be a marker for any country or entity that is interested in pursuing this kind of work.... If it's longer, what we found is that it's much more difficult for employers to forecast that far into the future."

– Bassel Ramli, Director of Global Mobility, JumpStart Refugee Talent

# Scholars at Risk Carleton – SAR Committee Co-Chairs Report

## Program Impact:

At-risk scholars hosted (since 2013): 20

Countries of origin: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq, Russia, Syria, Turkey, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, Yemen

Fields represented: Arts and culture, biology, communications, economics, engineering, English, journalism, legal studies, linguistics, mathematics, physics, political science, sociology  
Scholars continue contributing to teaching, research, and public discourse in Canada while maintaining connections to their regions of origin

## Governance and Oversight:

- Committee size: Over 20 faculty and professional staff
- Structure: Subcommittee-based governance model
- Result: Reduced administrative bottlenecks, increased institutional participation, and program sustainability



Members of SAR Carleton – Scholars at Risk initiative – offered a briefing on May 23 about supports being offered to displaced scholars and challenges facing the program.  
[Photo © Conference News Team]

## Program Model:

### Scholar Identification and Placement

- Scholars are placed across multiple departments to:
  - Strengthen institutional resilience
  - Broaden faculty awareness of scholar protection initiatives
- Host units provide:
  - Academic mentorship
  - Office space and intellectual integration
  - Discipline-specific professional support
- Interview (virtual) and Intake:
  - SAR Carleton hiring subcommittee
  - Host department representatives
- Assessment focuses on:
  - Academic fit and research alignment
  - Mentorship and teaching opportunities (where feasible)
  - Family and settlement considerations

# Scholars at Risk Carleton – SAR Committee Co-Chairs Report

## Scholar Care and Settlement Supports (Established 2019)

Carleton provides holistic settlement support addressing the full range of arrival and integration needs for scholars and families.

Key areas of support include:

- Temporary and long-term housing assistance
- School registration for children
- Banking and transit orientation
- Gym memberships
- Winter readiness and daily-life support
- Referrals to community services

Institutional partnerships include:

- Health Services (designated medical access)
- School of Linguistics (language and ESL support)
- Athletics
- Residences and Conference Services (short-term accommodation)

This model reduces pressure on public systems while improving integration outcomes.

## Academic and Labour Market Integration

Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Course (2024 and 2025)

The course accelerates integration by:

- Demystifying Canadian academic and research systems
- Building career readiness for academic and non-academic pathways
- Supporting transition into research teams and knowledge-based employment

Key considerations for government:

- Builds end-to-end protection pathways from arrival to labour market integration
- Aligns with federal priorities on:
  - Global talent attraction
  - Support for human rights defenders
  - Research capacity and innovation
- Demonstrates the role universities can play as trusted delivery partners for scholar protection initiatives
- Highlights ongoing need for durable immigration pathways beyond temporary status



Dr. Christine Duff, co-chair of SAR Carleton, with Dr. Laura Madokoro, speaks about 'scholar care.' [Photo © Conference News Team]

# Building Networks and Improving Policy for Equitable Access to Education and Research



Panelists from McMaster University, Wilfred Laurier University, University of Ottawa, and Carleton University (including PPP project research coordinator) discuss the enormous challenges facing displaced scholars attempting to continue their careers as teachers and researchers. [Photo © Conference News Team]

The focus is on preserving knowledge networks, not in terms of ‘brain drain’ and ‘brain gain,’ because the brain drain (elsewhere) does not necessarily translate into brain gain here in Canada or in the Global North. What happens is actually a brain loss, because the vast majority of displaced scholars never get the opportunity to work in the sectors that they want to work in.

— Dr. Elham Gharji, IDRC project research coordinator

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“Displacement of scholars is not only physically displaced actors... Especially Afghan women scholars [who] are often mentally displaced. They cannot continue thinking of their research or studies because of the turmoil and situation they are in.

— Dr. Marufa Shinwari, McMaster University

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[We need a] network or platform that’s more centered not on the institutions, but on the people who are being displaced...[The focus must be on creating] publishing opportunities, paid work for teaching research or other contracts, educational opportunities, and sharing of information on existing things in an archive for artists or other researchers.

— Dr. Tony Porter, McMaster University

# The PPP Project: Championing Academic Freedom



The Placement, Preservation and Perseverance (PPP) Project was presented through videos (see images to the left), presentations by project leads, and a panel of four student presenters from University of British Columbia who were part of the PPP project. Three students attended in-person and one attended virtually. The students presented their research conducted during the PPP Project. They shared their thoughts about displacement and integration in the Canadian academic landscape. The conversations focused on ways that governments and universities should “build with displacement in mind” and create systemic change to meet the needs of displaced students (summarized in the table below).

Area	Barrier for Students	Policy Recommendations
<b>Access to Education &amp; Financial Support</b>	International tuition fees make university unaffordable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply domestic tuition rates for refugee claimants</li> <li>• Expand tuition waivers &amp; scholarships</li> <li>• Create national scholarship frameworks with wraparound supports</li> </ul>
<b>Mental Health &amp; Well-being</b>	Isolation, trauma, stigma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide culturally responsive counselling, proactive check-ins</li> <li>• Create peer support groups &amp; storytelling initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>Gender-Responsive Supports</b>	Women juggle family roles, work, and study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide childcare &amp; flexible schedules</li> <li>• Create targeted mentorship programs</li> <li>• Collect gender-disaggregated data</li> </ul>
<b>Community Engagement</b>	Students feel disconnected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support student-led advocacy</li> <li>• Recognize youth as partners</li> <li>• Integrate lived experience into curriculum</li> </ul>
<b>Digital Access</b>	Digital divide limits learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand digital literacy &amp; tech access</li> <li>• Expand remote affiliation programs</li> </ul>
<b>Co-Design &amp; Representation</b>	Programs lack youth input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-design programs with displaced students’ lived experiences</li> <li>• Embed feedback loops in all programs for displaced students and scholars</li> <li>• Move beyond tokenism</li> </ul>

# Preserving Academic Freedom in Times of Uncertainty



Hon. Bob Rae, Canada's Permanent Ambassador to the United Nations (UN), spoke to conference participants May 22 about the enduring importance of academic freedom during a special address via video from New York. His remarks emphasized that defenders of academic freedom must always extend protection to the views they vehemently disagree with, or which are even widely considered outright wrong. [Photo © Conference News Team]

**“The key thing to remember now is it’s a battle that’s still ongoing. In fact, it’s even more intense and significant, because the country that has the largest number of great universities in the world – the United States – is right now engaged in a systematic attack on academic freedom. And it is what authoritarian governments do.”**

– Hon. Bob Rae, Canada's Permanent Ambassador of Canada to the United Nations



The final panel discussion of the Safe Havens conference included, Dr. Charles Reeves, Associate Dean at OCAD University; Norah Vollmer, SAR Carleton co-chair, Carleton University; Caroline Ford, Director of the Democratic and Inclusive Governance Division at IDRC; and moderator Dr. Catherine Khordoc, Deputy Provost (Operations and Planning) Carleton University.

**“Canada has an opportunity and a responsibility to lead. The world is witnessing rising threats to academic freedom, and yet displaced scholars and artists still face major barriers in Canada . . . We must move from reactive efforts to a coordinated and proactive national response.”**

– Norah Vollmer, SAR Carleton Co-chair and Manager of Faculty Affairs, Carleton University

# Hybrid Art Exhibition by At-Risk and Displaced Artists

“There’s a direct connection between the conversations that happen around the visual arts and the conversations that happen around society and social change.”

– Dr. Charles Reeve, OCAD University

An exhibition of artwork by two at-risk and displaced artists was displayed at the conference and on the conference website (selections shown below). The experiences and career challenges of at-risk and displaced artists were also highlighted in presentations during the conference. Additionally, the Safe Havens conference program was designed by an at-risk artist.

## “RESILIENCE, IDENTITY, TRANSFORMATION”

Canan Altinkas (Türkiye),  
Artist

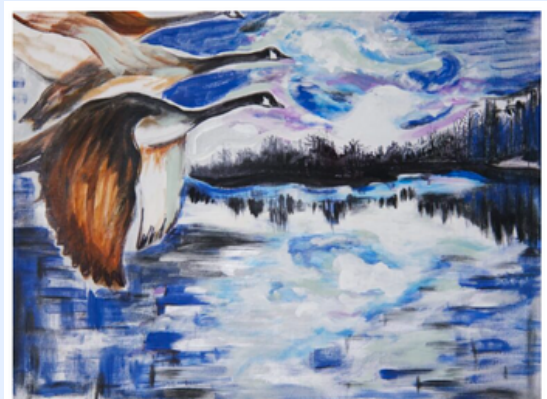


## “DYNAMISM AND MAXIMUM EMOTIONALITY”

Nataliia Kononova (Ukraine),  
Artist



*Autumn Leaf-Eater, Acrylic on Canvas, 2023*



*Meeting, Acrylic on Canvas, 2023*


## Key Challenges and Insights

Scholars at risk are highly skilled academics displaced by conflict, repression, or political instability. They represent both a humanitarian responsibility and a strategic opportunity for the preservation of knowledge and new skills. While Canadian universities and civil society demonstrate strong commitment, responses remain fragmented, project-based, and uneven. This limits the speed of response, increases administrative burden, and constrains scholars' ability to contribute fully to Canada's research, innovation, and education systems, and to contribute to democratic and inclusive governance abroad. At the same time, Canada is recalibrating immigration and higher education systems amid capacity pressures.

**Scholars-at-risk initiatives offer a low-volume, high-impact pathway aligned with public-interest objectives in science, innovation, labour-force development, and democratic resilience.**

### 1. Immigration and Legal Barriers

- Lack of a dedicated immigration stream for at-risk scholars, compounded by inaccessible biometrics and language tests in asylum countries, fragmented entry pathways (e.g., PR, refugee claimants, Temporary Resident Permit), and long processing times.
- Restricted mobility and settlement supports (e.g., eligibility for domestic tuition, aid, and services vary, often excluding newcomers from university access and affordability).
- Scholars face significant career setbacks during long wait times.
- Transnational repression and fear; ongoing risks and impacts on free speech even after arrival.



Canada has the expertise and goodwill to support scholars at risk, but lacks a predictable and coordinated framework to do so efficiently.

– Conference Participant

## 2. Precarious Employment, Recognition, and Career Continuity

- Short-term fellowships (1–2 years) create uncertainty, while limited tenure-track positions and heavy reliance on contract teaching—along with union rules that block special hiring—further restrict long-term career stability and impeding continuity of research and networks
- Non-recognition of foreign credentials/experience by employers and licensing bodies.
- Scarce tenure-track roles; tokenistic use (guest lectures; limited integration).
- Weak mentorship and networking—without connections, finding work in their area of expertise “is almost impossible.”
- Artists face extra hurdles - costly materials/studios, low baseline incomes in the arts, limited exhibition access, and eligibility rules that exclude displaced artists from many grants.

## 3. Systemic and Institutional Gaps

- Lack of national hosting guidelines; fragmented responses.
- EDI frameworks rarely include displacement.
- Credential discrimination, visa issues, language barriers, and mental health challenges hinder full participation.
- Ad hoc, siloed programs: Goodwill exists, but responses are episodic and rely on a few champions; limited national coordination.
- Literature and data gaps: Insufficient, disaggregated information about displaced scholars/artists to inform policy and counter bias (e.g., few studies focus specifically on Afghan scholars; existing research generalizes them as “Muslim” or “refugee”).

## 4. Gender-Specific Barriers

- Women scholars face compounded risks: caregiving, cultural restrictions, digital divide, leaving and fragmented families, and guilt dynamics.
- Mental displacement and trauma: Afghan women scholars were described as “mentally displaced” and are unable to focus on research due to the environment and losses; speakers highlighted depression and anxiety and called for respectful, trauma-aware care
- Male scholars experience anxiety related to gender norms, too, like retaining ‘breadwinner/provider’ roles, loss of professional status and income, and new roles to assume in a culturally diverse/different society
- Gender-diverse data is missing from the literature

Women frequently become family translators and breadwinners while studying and working, adding stress and limiting time for research and practice.  
– Conference Presenter

## 5. Mental Health, Social Integration, and Lived Experience

- Isolation, trauma, lack of culturally responsive counselling.
- Mental health stigma and impacts are significant and often unspoken.
- Displacement programs create symbolic inclusion but exclude scholars epistemically and socially.
- Colonial narratives and narratives of Western superiority impact perception of scholars from other countries, especially countries in the Global South (e.g., The PPP Project found that Afghan scholars are often viewed through Orientalist or tokenistic lenses)
- Explicit and implicit bias: Public sentiment and misconceptions about refugees negatively affect employment experiences (e.g., interviews, hiring processes), as well as workplace interactions and environment (e.g., university campus climate)
- Complex identity negotiations:
  - Dual identity (e.g., being “two people”: who they were vs. who they’re becoming; loss of language, culture, and community).
  - Scholars navigate conflicting cultural, religious, and gendered expectations, creating internal conflict beyond academic performance.

Not to be neglected also is social integration and family life, because many researchers do not come on their own; they come with the family, with children, and there are many everyday challenges to overcome even before they can start working.

– Conference Presenter

# FINAL REPORT SUMMARY:

## STRENGTHENING CANADA'S RESPONSE TO SCHOLARS AT RISK

IDRC-funded initiatives demonstrate that Canada has both the capacity and the opportunity to lead globally in protecting at-risk and displaced scholars. These programs advance the UN Sustainable Development Goals, safeguard global knowledge networks, and reinforce Canada's research and innovation ecosystem. Transitioning from fragmented, institution-by-institution responses to coordinated, national-level systems will uphold academic freedom while enabling displaced scholars to contribute fully to Canada's social, scientific, and democratic resilience.

### Policy Recommendations

The federal government should **(1) establish a national Scholars-at-Risk (SAR) program supported by stable, long-term funding and modeled on effective international frameworks** such as CARA in the UK, PAUSE in France, and Germany's Philipp Schwartz Initiative. A centralized approach would ensure equity across institutions, strengthen coordination, and uphold Canada's commitments to human rights and academic freedom. In parallel, the government should **(2) implement expedited immigration pathways**, featuring fast-track visa processing, flexible documentation requirements, and clear temporary-to-permanent residence options, to prevent delays that compromise scholars' safety and hinder Canada's ability to attract high-impact research talent. Finally, **(3) SAR initiatives should be framed as strategic national investments**: low-volume, high-impact pathways that enhance Canada's labour market, advance innovation goals, and bolster global knowledge security.

Provincial governments should **(1) integrate Scholars-at-Risk (SAR) into advanced education planning and skilled workforce strategies** to better align displaced scholars' expertise with regional research priorities and labour market needs. Provinces also need to **(2) provide targeted bridge funding, streamlined credential recognition, and short-term employment pathways** to accelerate scholars' professional integration, reduce administrative barriers, and enable them to contribute quickly and meaningfully to provincial research, innovation, and economic development goals.

Universities and research institutions should **(1) standardize onboarding and appointments** to ensure displaced scholars receive consistent access to research facilities, administrative support, and clear role expectations. To promote equitable participation, institutions must **(2) embed gender-responsive supports and mental health supports that address trauma, caregiving responsibilities, social isolation, and gender-specific barriers**, offering culturally informed counselling and family-focused integration services. This can be accomplished by leveraging existing resources within the university. They should also **(3) guarantee research access and**

mentorship through structured guidance and meaningful scholarly roles that help scholars rebuild their academic trajectories. Finally, universities must (4) enable career pathways beyond hosting by providing connections to both academic and non-academic opportunities, strengthening long-term retention and contributions to Canada's research and innovation ecosystem.

National networks should **(1) develop shared crisis-response protocols** to coordinate emergency placements and ensure consistent data reporting with disaggregated outcomes that strengthen transparency and impact assessment. They must also preserve global knowledge networks by **(2) funding collaborative, transnational research initiatives and supporting diaspora-led projects** that maintain connections to international scholarly communities. In addition, networks should advance Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion frameworks by **(3) explicitly recognizing displacement and migration status within EDI policies**, thereby formalizing support for at-risk and displaced scholars across institutions.

# Key Strategies For Establishing a National Program in Canada

## 1. Federal Government

- 1.1. Establish a National Program for Scholars at Risk
  - Fund a national coordination body modeled on CARA (UK), PAUSE (France), and Philipp Schwartz Initiative – Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Germany)
  - Government-backed, multi-sectoral, with sustainable funding and coordination
- 1.2. Create a Dedicated Immigration Pathway
  - Establish targeted, expedited immigration mechanisms for scholars at risk (e.g., accelerated visas and work permits)
  - Visa facilitation for families (e.g., France PAUSE program): fast-track visas are typically issued within two weeks, cover direct family, and permit work (a key enabler of family well-being and stability)
  - Enable temporary-to-permanent pathways aligned with academic appointments.
  - Flexibilities for documentation and language testing
- 1.3. Institutionalize Support in Universities and Expand Multi-sector Partnerships
  - Embed SAR programs in academic planning and hiring
  - Provide access to research centers, libraries, and office space for displaced scholars.
  - Link universities with industry, NGOs, and government for employment and research opportunities
  - Fund collaborative research, digital platforms, and diaspora-led initiatives to maintain scholarly continuity

## 2. Provincial Governments

- Integrate Scholars-at-Risk (SAR) into advanced education planning and skilled workforce strategies to better align displaced scholars' expertise with regional research priorities and labour market needs
- Provide bridge targeted bridge funding, streamlined credential recognition, and short-term employment pathways to accelerate scholars' professional integration, reduce administrative barriers, and enable them to contribute quickly and meaningfully to cutting-edge research in their field

“ ———

Displaced experts don't lose expertise crossing borders; they lose tools and networks. Canada can restore those.

– Conference Presenter

### 3. Universities (Hosting and Support)

#### 3.1. Institutionalize and Sustain

- Shift from goodwill to strategy: embed Scholars at Risk (SAR) and artist protection work into planning, hiring, and budgeting
- Build cross-campus committees; formalize partnerships beyond single champions.
- Collaborate across universities (avoid competition): share models, co-design initiatives, and leverage sector networks (e.g., WUSC, SAR Canada, UNHCR MOUs) to act collectively
- Adopt standardized onboarding and appointment models
- Create central coordination offices to streamline scholar support

#### 3.2. Access & Admissions

- Implement tuition waiver models and reduce international fees for precarious-status students
- Create bridge affiliations (library access, institutional emails) for scholars who cannot cross borders
- Provide immigration support: dedicated staff to navigate pathways
- Enable remote teaching, research, and opportunities for scholars waiting abroad to prevent career gaps

#### 3.3. Employability & Integration

- Set realistic expectations from day one—Canadian academia is competitive; hosting ≠ guaranteed job
- Pair hosting with clear career pathways (academic and alternative)
- Scale mentorship and networking: assign mentors, host advocacy seminars, and ensure meaningful roles (co-teaching, research teams, exhibitions) rather than tokenistic guest slots
- Develop credential bridging: partner with licensing bodies, HR units, and industry to recognize foreign expertise; offer micro-credentials and supervised practice routes.
- Provide artist-specific resources: studio space, materials stipends, exhibition platforms, and teaching opportunities in arts programs; integrate at-risk artists into programming—not only diversity months

#### 3.4. Lived Experience, Social Integration, & Mental Health

- Offer culturally responsive counselling embedded in onboarding
- Build community: peer groups, storytelling/film initiatives, student advocacy courses, and art shows to foster belonging and protect freedom of expression
- Social integration and family life must be actively supported by host institutions; programs should resource family-life support alongside academic integration; conduct proactive check-ins
- Dedicated resources at host institutions for language courses, networking, and longer-term support structures that include family-centered needs
- Ensure safety protocols during events (consent for media; posting with approval) are part of scholar care that also protects families' security and privacy

### 3.5. Gender-Responsive Design

- Prioritize placements for women facing heightened risk
- Offer flexible workload, childcare support, and family-friendly policies
- Provide targeted mentorship for women; normalize role conflict; create space to rebuild careers
- Actively ask about non-academic support needs
- Advocate to expand EDI frameworks to include displacement: explicitly recognize at-risk and displaced artists and scholars in grants and hiring

### 3.6. Knowledge & Co-Design

- Co-produce teaching and research with displaced scholars/artists and student groups
- Decolonize universities and rethink ways of knowing:
  - Value diverse epistemologies, not just Western models.
  - Value lived expertise as academic expertise.
  - Uplift and amplify displaced knowledge and reshape concepts of academic belonging
  - For example, preserve Afghan intellectual heritage: Archive, publish, and support continuation of Afghan scholarly traditions
- Move beyond tokenism; recognize Afghan scholars as knowledge producers and cultural bridges
- Embed evaluation within programming (e.g., youth “PhotoVoice”)
- Gather better data (gender/age/status disaggregation) and actively counter misinformation in local communities and hiring processes
  - Conduct Primary Research: Interviews, case studies, oral histories to capture experiences



## 4. National Networks

### 4.1. National Program & Policy Reform

- Establish a coordinated, government-backed SAR program with sustainable funding
- Develop shared crisis-response protocols
- Collect and report disaggregated outcome data (gender, age, status).
- Advocate for fast-track immigration pathways recognizing academic credentials and skills
- Advocate for the integration of displaced scholars into Canada's EDI frameworks
- Public campaigns to frame hosting scholars as investment in innovation and global justice, not charity

### 4.2. Employment & Career Pathways

- Develop transition routes from temporary to permanent positions
- Include displaced scholars in Tri-council and research centers, as well as fellowships, and adjunct roles
- Encourage cross-sector partnerships (universities, industry, NGOs) for non-academic careers

### 4.3. Gender-Responsive Supports

- Targeted scholarships and mentorship for women scholars
- Expand digital literacy and remote work programs (e.g., Women in Tech Afghanistan)
- Advocate for institutionalizing accessible childcare and family reunification assistance

### 4.4. Capacity Building & Networks

- Preserve knowledge networks to prevent brain drain, enable future reconstruction in home countries
- Support diaspora-led initiatives and alumni networks for peer mentoring
- Promote expedited credential systems for displaced students

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Safe Havens Conference would not have been possible without the contributions of the following organizations and team members. We would like to extend our gratitude for the hard work which made this conference a success.

We gratefully recognize the Scholars At-Risk Carleton Co-Chairs Andrew Johnston, Christine Duff, Aaron Doyle, Norah Vollmer, and Adjunct Research Professor Megan Graham, for initiating and leading this year's conference from concept to completion. We would like to acknowledge the work of the conference coordinating team, including Norah Vollmer, Megan Graham, Monserrat Ramirez Ruvalcaba, Temidayo Fawole, Sakib Ahsan, Bana Al Tahir, Randy Boswell, and journalism students and our many volunteers. We'd like to give special recognition to N.V. for being the inspiration and driving force behind SAR Carleton. Her tireless hard work, dedication, and leadership truly spearheaded its success.

We extend our gratitude to Roula El-Rifai and the Government of Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) for their support of this conference. Their commitment to investing in the role of research to finding solutions to issues in the international development sector has helped make this gathering possible. This conference was also made possible by the foundation built by the Carleton University/University of British Columbia Placement, Preservation and Perseverance (PPP) project.

We would also like to thank and acknowledge the help and support of Pauline Rankin, Betina Appel Kuzmarov, the SAR Committee, and the larger Carleton Community.

For the AACA course, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all those who have generously supported this project with their encouragement, expertise, and enthusiasm for this important initiative. Our gratitude goes to the Royal Society of Canada; Scholars at Risk (SAR) Carleton; Carleton Teaching and Learning Services; the Advisory Board for Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate for New Scholars in Canada; the External Program Evaluators for the Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate for New Scholars in Canada; SAR donors and supporters; and the presenters and participants of the Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate for New Scholars in Canada.

Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the strength and courage of our at-risk and displaced scholars. We recognize the difficulties in being acknowledged explicitly, but we thank all who contributed to the conference and AACA course as consultants, advisors and participants.

Finally, we would like to thank participants and speakers for sharing their experience and expertise, as well as all those who have encouraged us along the way. We hope this conference serves as an opportunity to foster dialogue, strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration, and build sustainable systems for protecting global knowledge networks and academic freedom.

# NOTES

[1] Scholars at Risk Network (2025). Free to Think: Report of the Scholars at Risk Academic Freedom Monitoring Project. [Free to Think 2025 | Scholars at Risk](#)

[2] More information about national models in Europe can be found in the publication: [“Researchers at Risk: An Update on National-level Actions in Europe 2024”](#)

[3] <https://theconversation.com/3-ways-canada-can-welcome-and-support-scientists-displaced-by-war-and-persecution-238141>

[4] <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/sunday/canada-refugee-support-decline-change-9.7013578>

[5] <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/about-refugee-system/welcome-syrian-refugees/looking-future.html>

[6] <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/economic-mobility-pathways-pilot.html>

[7] <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/sponsor-refugee/private-sponsorship-program/groups-five.html>

[8] Canada is one of 16 national sections and 14 partners (<https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/the-network/>)

[9] For more information about SAR Carleton’s accomplishments, please see [Information about us - Scholars at Risk](#)

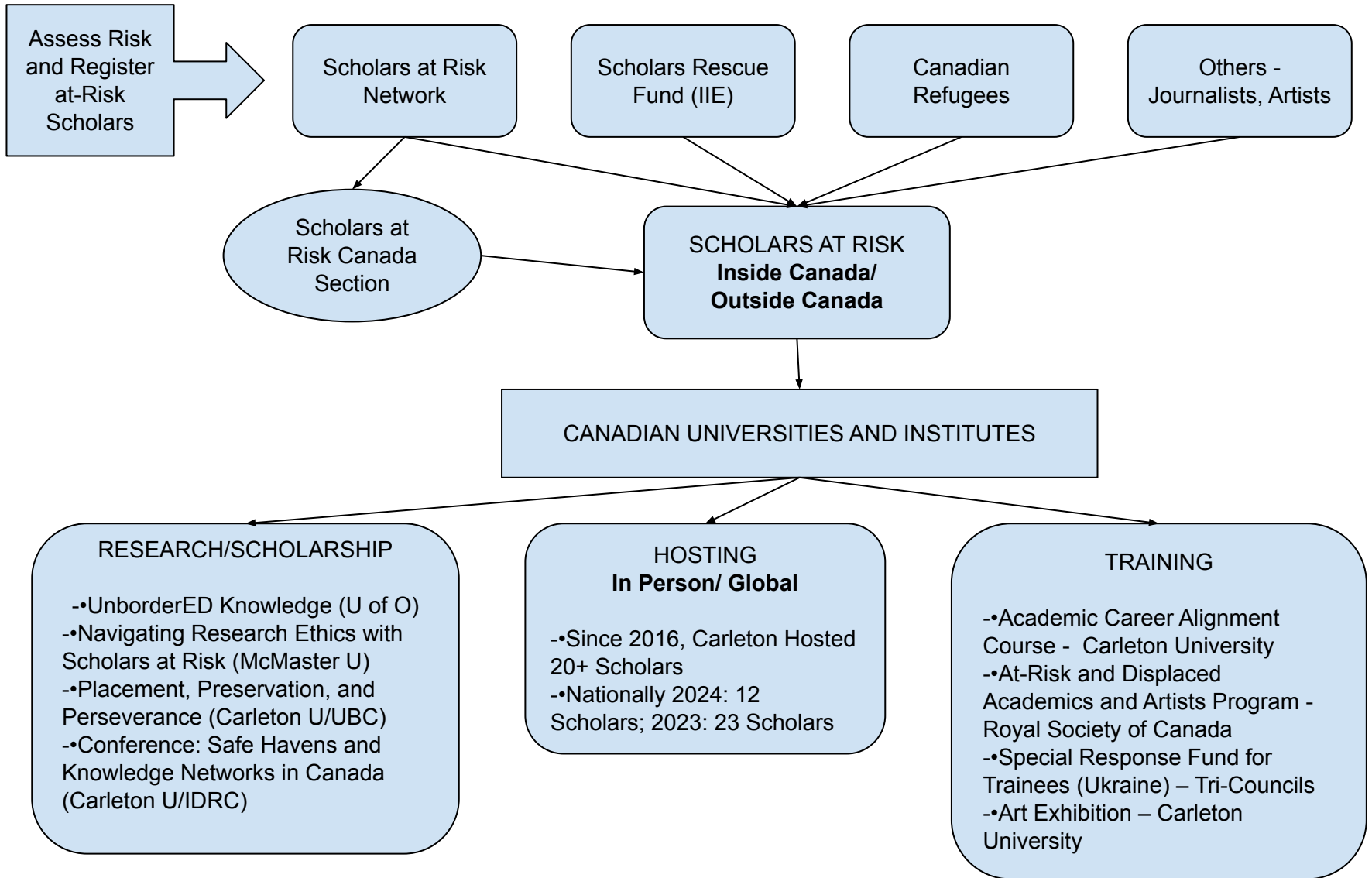
[10] [Evaluation Report: Carleton University Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate for New Scholars in Canada \(June 2024\)](#).

[11] <https://cusjc.ca/scholars-at-risk/2025/05/28/keynote-panel-canada-needs-to-be-part-of-global-paradigm-shift-to-support-scholars-at-risk/>

[12] [‘Allies in Exile’ event spurs creation of press club for displaced women journalists – Scholars at Risk Conference](#)

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# SCHOLARS AT RISK IN CANADA



Carleton University Initiative:

**Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate for New Scholars in Canada**

**April 2025**

*Prepared by N. Vollmer ([norah.vollmer@carleton.ca](mailto:norah.vollmer@carleton.ca)) and Megan Graham ([megan.graham@carleton.ca](mailto:megan.graham@carleton.ca))  
with input from the Advisory Board*

Scholars at Risk Carleton is excited to invite at-risk and displaced scholars, artists, and activists to participate in the upcoming Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate for New Scholars in Canada (April 2025). This certificate course was piloted last year in collaboration with the Placement, Preservation and Perseverance: Afghan At-Risk Scholars, Activists and Students (PPP) project funded by IDRC and the University of British Columbia. The overarching objective of the certificate course is to build Canadian academic credentials to address gaps in teaching and/or research productivity due to career interruptions and/or foreign credentials, as well as to offer related training for pursuing employment in sectors beyond academia where scholars in Canada work.

The certificate course is open to scholars, artists, and activists at risk in Canada, including those who have already completed the Royal Society of Canada's At-Risk and Displaced Academics and Artists (ARDAA) workshop. This program consists of workshops developed specifically to complement and expand upon topics covered in the AARDA workshop, providing participants with continuity and opportunity to engage more deeply with topics related to career landscapes for academics in Canada.

The goal of the workshop series to provide scholars with knowledge and practical tools for navigating the career landscape for academics in Canada. The certificate course consists of a series of live Zoom workshops for at-risk scholars to complement existing career resources both on and off-campus at Canadian universities.

An important addition to this year's certificate course is the introduction of discipline-focused sessions for selected sessions. Participants in Business, Engineering, Arts and Social Science, and Science will have opportunities to learn about particular topics from an expert in their field. This will provide discipline-specific information, networking opportunities, and important feedback related to participants' own areas of research and expertise.

**Workshop Series Learning Objectives**

By the end of the workshop series, participants will:

1. Identify career pathways for academics in Canada, as well as transferable career skills, job opportunities, and continuing education options in the Canadian academic, alt-academic, and industry contexts;
2. Understand academic landscapes in the Canadian context (e.g., research funding opportunities in Canada; engaging with research teams to gain Canadian experience; research publication and knowledge dissemination; research ethics and institutional review board processes; and equity, diversity, and inclusion in research);
3. Develop and practice communication skills and strategies for networking within academia and beyond academia to navigate Canadian career landscapes;
4. Acquire discipline-specific mentorship, networking opportunities, and professional feedback to support next steps in Canada

Participants will receive a certificate upon completion of this workshop series.

\*Note that this will be a participation-based program and no formal assessment will be done. Attendees must commit to attending the full suite of workshops. When possible, recorded sessions will be made available via Brightspace. Participants will get maximum benefit by attending the live sessions.

For support accessing the Brightspace page, please visit the Carleton website about [navigating Brightspace](#) or contact the [Brightspace Support Desk](#).

### Detailed Session Schedule

Please note: All sessions are hosted on Zoom. [CLICK HERE](#) to launch the Zoom session. The link and passcode are the same for all sessions. The passcode will be sent via email and available in Brightspace.

#### Session 1: Monday, April 7, 2025, 1-2:30pm EST

Introduction & Career Pathways	Discussion Points	Speakers
Introduction and Career Pathways: An overview of the program and a discussion on career pathways in Canada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome to the workshop series</li> <li>• Pathways: academia; government/Industry; further education (Ontario Student Assistance Program)</li> <li>• How the university works (policies, academic ranks, tenure)</li> <li>• Academics working in Government of Canada jobs and other sectors</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Doris Kakuru</u></b>, Professor, Child and Youth Studies, University of Victoria</p> <p><b><u>Luciara Nardon</u></b>, Professor, International Business, Sprott School of Business, Carleton University</p> <p><b><u>Russ MacDonald</u></b>, Manager, Programmes, The Royal Society of Canada</p> <p><b><u>Sulaimon Giwa</u></b>, Associate Professor and Interim Dean, Memorial University; Member, The Royal Society of Canada</p> <p><b><u>Norah Vollmer</u></b>, Manager, Faculty Affairs, Carleton University</p> <p><b><u>Megan Graham</u></b>, Adjunct Research Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University</p>

**Things to do after the session:**

- Explore the Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate for New Scholars in Canada Brightspace page
- Sign up for workshops and training at your university

**Session 2: Tuesday, April 8, 2025, 1-2:30pm EST; Extended session 2:30-3:15pm EST**

<b>Career Pathways and Toolkits – Part 2</b>	<b>Discussion Points</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
Creating an Alt-Academic/Industry Job Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Job ad websites and resources for different pathways</li><li>• Resume and cover letter writing for non-academic positions</li><li>• Transferable skills between academia and other sectors</li><li>• Revisiting Government of Canada jobs for academics</li></ul> <p><b><i>*An extended session will follow at 2:30pm to discuss:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Navigating the industry job market</li><li>• Application process and timeline</li><li>• Skills to highlight for employers</li><li>• Networking opportunities</li><li>• Experience of transitioning from academia to industry</li></ul>	<p><b><u>Karim Abuawad</u></b>, Professional Development Coordinator, The Office of Graduate Studies, Carleton University</p> <p><b><u>David Lafferty</u></b>, Professional Development Coordinator, The Office of Graduate Studies, Carleton University</p> <p><i>*Business students will join a break-out room in the 1pm session:</i></p> <p><b><u>Bahman Radnejad</u></b>, Bissett School of Business, Mount Royal University</p> <hr/> <p><b><i>*Extended Session for engineering 2:30-3:15pm (all welcome):</i></b></p> <p><b><u>Paraskevas Mylonas</u></b>, P.Eng., PMP, Structural Engineer - National Design Automation Lead, Bridges, WSP</p>
<p><b>Things to do before class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Locate companies and/or organizations that employ people in your field and identify potential hiring managers</li><li>• Search find potential positions using job ad sites (e.g., LinkedIn)</li><li>• Compare your resume with required qualifications on the job ad</li><li>• Identify your barriers to applying for positions and/or reaching out to hiring managers</li></ul>		
<p><b>In-class activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compare your examples of resumes provided for non-academic positions</li><li>• Identify the type of resume that works best for you</li><li>• Using example transferable, make a list of examples for your work experience that support each skill</li></ul>		

- Note career gaps and special circumstances (including research slowdowns). Consider strategies to address them (including signing up for workshops).

**Things to do after class:**

- Set up a GCJobs account (if applicable)
- Continue to review your resume
- Explore the additional resources about creating resumes
- Brainstorm transferable skills (tip: using a job ad can be helpful to identify employer skills and align them with academic skills)

**Session 3: Wednesday, April 9, 2025, 1-2:30pm EST; Extended session 2:30-3:15pm EST**

Career Pathways and Toolkits – Part 3	Discussion Points	Speakers
<p>Creating Academic Job Applications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic job ad websites and resources for finding academic jobs</li> <li>• CV writing for academic jobs</li> <li>• Cover letter writing for academia</li> </ul> <p><b><i>*An extended session will follow at 2:30pm to discuss:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigating the academic job market – expectations and timelines</li> <li>• Academic job application stages</li> <li>• Interview preparation</li> <li>• What to expect during the academic job interview</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Karim Abuawad</u></b>, Professional Development Coordinator, The Office of Graduate Studies, Carleton University</p> <p><b><u>David Lafferty</u></b>, Professional Development Coordinator, The Office of Graduate Studies, Carleton University</p> <p><i>*Business students will join a break-out room in the 1pm session:</i></p> <p><b><u>Bahman Radnejad</u></b>, Bissett School of Business, Mount Royal University</p> <hr/> <p><b><i>*Extended session from 2:30-3:15pm (all welcome):</i></b></p> <p><b><u>Nick Tepylo</u></b>, Assistant Professor, Mechanical &amp; Aerospace Engineering, Clarkson University</p> <p><b><u>Azar Masoumi</u></b>, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University</p>
<p><b>Things to do before class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locate a faculty mentor in your field to review your CV</li> <li>• Search academic jobs (University Affairs website) and find a potential position</li> <li>• If possible, compare your CV with 1) required qualifications; and 2) CVs/research websites of academics in the relevant department/units</li> </ul>		

<p><b>In-class activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compare your CV to examples of CVs provided in the session</li> <li>• Analyze structure of job posters for academic positions</li> <li>• Note career gaps and special circumstances (including research slowdowns). Consider strategies to address them (including signing up for workshops)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Things to do after class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Continue to review your CV and cover letter</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Explore the additional resources about creating CVs for academic applications</li> </ul>

**Session 4: Friday, April 11, 2025, 1-2:30pm EST**

<b>Topic 4: Career Pathways and Toolkits – Part 4</b>	<b>Discussion Points</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
Teaching Philosophy Statements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of the teaching portfolio and its components</li> <li>• Purpose and architecture of the teaching philosophy statement</li> <li>• Strategies for writing successful teaching philosophy statements and teaching dossiers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Morgan Rooney</b>, Educational Development Coordinator, Teaching and Learning Services, Carleton University; Adjunct Research Professor &amp; Sessional Instructor, Department of English, Carleton University</p>
<p><b>Things to do before class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at examples of teaching portfolios (sometimes called teaching dossiers): <a href="#">Teaching Dossier   Centre for Teaching and Learning</a></li> <li>• Try a worksheet for getting started on your statement (e.g., <a href="#">Teaching Philosophy Statements - June 2023.pdf</a>)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>In-class activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshopping philosophy statements as a group</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Things to do after class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Start a draft of your teaching philosophy statement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Begin compiling your documents in a folder to build your teaching portfolio</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reach out to your university’s teaching centre for more assistance</li> </ul>		

**Session 5: Tuesday, April 15, 1-2:30pm EST**

<b>Topic 5: Networking</b>	<b>Discussion Points</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
Networking: A discussion on finding other researchers in your area of expertise and making contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining networking</li> <li>• Why and when networking matters</li> <li>• Reaching out to potential colleagues and contacts</li> </ul>	<p><b>David Lafferty</b>, Professional Development Coordinator, The Office of Graduate Studies, Carleton</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Cold calling” - How to invite someone for a “virtual coffee” or informational interview</li> <li>• Social media and LinkedIn</li> <li>• Safety and security on social media</li> <li>• Creating your “Elevator Speech”</li> </ul>	<b>John Nelson</b> , Director, Innovation Hub, Carleton University
<p><b>Things to do before class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up a LinkedIn profile (if safe to do so)</li> <li>• Identify 2–3 researchers or institutions related to their area of interest (e.g., via Google Scholar, LinkedIn, university websites)</li> <li>• Reflect on past networking experiences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A time you successfully made a professional connection</li> <li>○ What you find challenging or intimidating about networking</li> <li>○ What you hope to gain from learning about academic networking</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<p><b>In-class activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locate potential colleagues/principal investigators at Canadian universities and/or research institutions</li> <li>• Draft an introductory message you might send by private on LinkedIn(using an example)</li> <li>• Draft an email introduction message you might send to another professor or department chair (using an example)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Things to do after class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Write, refine, practice, and record your Elevator Speech <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Refine the “elevator speech” drafted in class.</li> <li>○ Record a 30–60 second video of yourself delivering it.</li> <li>○ Reflect on what felt strong and what could be improved</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Social media self-audit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review your public social media profiles (LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.).</li> <li>○ Assess: What does your online presence currently say about you as a researcher? Are there any changes you plan to make for safety or professionalism? What actions will help you align your online presence with your academic and research goals?</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Connect with at least three professionals or researchers in your field using a personalized LinkedIn message</li> </ul>		

**Session 6: Wednesday, April 16, 2025, 1-2:30pm EST**

<b>Topic 6: Library Research Management</b>	<b>Discussion Points</b>	<b>Speakers</b>
Library Research Management, Publishing, and Communications: A focus on library resources, developing research impact, publishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact factors (Google Scholar, ORCID, ResearchGate, Academia)</li> <li>• Managing your research profile</li> <li>• Copyright</li> </ul>	<b>Pat Moore</b> , Scholarly Communications & Research Engagement Librarian, Carleton University

opportunities, and effective communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open access and intellectual property</li> <li>• Citation indexes</li> <li>• Publication landscape in Canada/area of expertise</li> <li>• Strategies for research communication</li> </ul>	<b>Valerie Critchley</b> , Copyright and Scholarly Communications Librarian, Carleton University
<p><b>Things to do before class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create or update your researcher profiles on ORCID and Google Scholar (or learn about these platforms)</li> <li>• Find and review an academic profile on ORCID or Google Scholar and take notes: What does a strong research presence look like? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What types of publications they list</li> <li>○ What citation metrics or impact measures do you see (if available)</li> <li>○ How they describe their research interests or communicate their work</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<p><b>In-class activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class discussion</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Things to do after class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Audit and strengthen your research identity online <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review your profiles on ORCID and Google Scholar</li> <li>○ Update any missing information (e.g., affiliations, keywords, bios)</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Draft a research communication plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Who is your audience (e.g., academic peers, policy makers, public)?</li> <li>○ What communication channels might you use (e.g., social media, email, LinkedIn)?</li> <li>○ What is your goal (e.g., build visibility, influence policy, attract collaborators)?</li> <li>○ Identify one potential challenge and how you might address it</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

**Session 7: Tuesday, April 22, 1-2:30pm EST**

Topic 7: Research Ethics	Discussion Points	Speakers
Research Ethics: A review of how to locate and navigate research ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research ethics boards at Canadian institutions</li> <li>• Laws, regulations, and policies (including EDI, Indigenous Research Ethics Board), Risk Management, Privacy</li> <li>• TCPS2 Core Training Certificate</li> <li>• Carleton University ethics: CUREB-A (Arts, Humanities, Business, and Public Affairs) and CUREB-B (Science, Health, Engineering &amp;</li> </ul>	<p><b>Gordon DuVal</b>, Director, Office of Research Ethics, Carleton University</p> <p><b>Bernadette Campbell</b>, Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, Carleton University</p>

	AMP: Design, Psychology, and Cognitive Science) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research ethics in other sectors</li> </ul>	
<b>Things to do before class:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review <a href="#">Who needs to apply for Ethics? - Office of Research Ethics (carleton.ca)</a></li> <li>• Read the Carleton Office of Research Ethics FAQ page: <a href="#">FAQ - Office of Research Ethics (carleton.ca)</a></li> <li>• Locate the Tri-Council Policy Statement on the Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (<a href="#">Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2 (2022) (ethics.gc.ca)</a>).</li> </ul>		
<b>In-class activities:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class discussion</li> </ul>		
<b>Things to do after class:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Complete the TCPS 2: CORE-2022 (Course on Research Ethics): <a href="#">TCPS 2: CORE-2022 (tcps2core.ca)</a> *Download and save the certificate</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Visit your university’s research ethics webpage (e.g., Carleton’s CUREB-A or CUREB-B) and find:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Application process</li> <li>○ Guidelines for your discipline</li> <li>○ Contact information for the REB or coordinator</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Analyze a real-world case or hypothetical scenario and apply ethical principles (<a href="#">Hypothetical Scenarios - CIHR</a>)             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What are the main ethical risks involved?</li> <li>○ What principles (e.g., consent, privacy, EDI, Indigenous considerations) are at play?</li> <li>○ How would you minimize harm and uphold ethical standards?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

**Session 8: Wednesday, April 23, 2025, 1-2:30pm EST**

Topic 8: Research Grants	Discussion Points	Speakers
Research Grants in Canada: A review of the Tri-Agency and research team composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thinking about grants in the Canadian context</li> <li>• Overview of the Canadian tri-councils (NSERC, SSHRC, and CIHR)</li> <li>• Knowledge transfer/mobilization in the Canadian context</li> <li>• Locating and partnering with a Principal Investigator (PI)</li> <li>• Composition of research teams and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Michael Agnew</b>, Manager, Research Services &amp; Initiatives, Faculty of Public Affairs, Carleton University</p> <p><b>Kristin Bourassa</b>, Research Facilitator (Early Career), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Carleton University</p> <p><b>Sue Geffken-Graham</b>, Research Facilitator, Carleton Office for Research Initiatives and Services, Carleton University</p>

**Things to do before class:**

- Explore the Canadian Tri-Agency websites to build a basic awareness of funding agencies and the types of research they support.
  - **SSHRC** – Social Sciences and Humanities <https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca>
  - **NSERC** – Natural Sciences and Engineering <https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca>
  - **CIHR** – Health Research <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca>
- Review an example of a funded research project to understand how research grants support real-world work and how research teams are built
  - Choose one funded project in your field or of interest.
  - Note: Who the primary investigator (**PI**) is and their institution? What the research is about? Who's on the team (if listed)? Any mention of **knowledge mobilization** or equity, diversity, and inclusion (**EDI**)?
- Reflect on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in research teams and collaborative research
  - Suggested reading: Tri-Agency EDI Action Plan: [NSERC - Action Plan](#); SSHRC EDI Guidelines: [Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research](#)

**In-class activities:**

- Class discussion

**Things to do after class:**

- Draft a mock research team with EDI Considerations
  - Imagine a small research project in your field
  - Create a mock research team (3–5 roles) and describe:
    - What expertise each member brings
    - How EDI considerations are reflected (e.g., interdisciplinary, inclusion of underrepresented voices, early-career researchers, etc.)
- Write a mini knowledge mobilization plan
  - How would you share their research with non-academic audiences?
  - Tools or methods (e.g., social media, workshops, community reports, podcasts)
  - Reflect on why knowledge mobilization matters for Canadian funding

**Session 9: Tuesday, April 29, 2025, 1-2:30pm EST**

Topic 9	Discussion Points	Speakers
Journal Articles and Publishing: A discussion on the publishing system and roles of those involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Peer-reviewed journals and review process</li><li>• Review tiers of publishing</li><li>• Open access journals</li></ul>	<b>Paul Goode</b> , McMillan Chair of Russian Studies, Carleton University (EURUS)/Editor-in-Chief of Communist and Post-Communist Studies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connections between conferences and publishing</li> <li>• Publishing in news media and alternative academic forums</li> <li>• Predatory journals and conferences</li> </ul>	<p><b>Stephan Gruber</b>, Geography and Environmental Studies, Carleton University</p> <p><b>Sarah Everts</b>, Associate Professor, CTV Chair in Digital Science Journalism, School of Journalism and Communication, Carleton University</p> <p><b>Cynthia Cruickshank</b>, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering/Associate Dean, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, Faculty of Engineering and Design, Carleton University</p> <p><i>*Business students will join a break-out room in the 1pm session:</i></p> <p><b>Bahman Radnejad</b>, Bissett School of Business, Mount Royal University</p> <p><b>Hadi Fariborzi</b>, Bissett School of Business, Mount Royal University</p>
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**Things to before class:**

- Locate 1 academic journals in your field
  - Review manuscript preparation guidelines and peer-review process information
  - Who is the publisher? What is the scope or subject area? Is it open access?
- Read a short article on predatory journal ([How to Avoid Deceptive Publishers | Before Engaging in Research](#)) and consult additional resources:
  - For Deceptive Journals: [Identify trusted publishers for your research • Think. Check. Submit.](#)
  - For Deceptive Conferences: [Think. Check. Attend. • Think. Check. Submit.](#)

**In-class activity:**

- Class discussion

**Things to do after class:**

- Evaluate a journal using a credibility checklist to assess quality of the journal

- Choose a journal from your field
- Use a checklist: <https://thinkchecksubmit.org>
- Evaluate:
  - Is the journal credible or potentially predatory?
  - How did you determine that?
  - Would you consider submitting to this journal in the future? Why or why not?
- Draft a publication plan to start thinking about future publishing paths. Choose a real or hypothetical project idea and decide the following:
  - What kind of publication would suit this work?
  - What journal(s) might you target?
  - Would you consider presenting at a conference first? Why or why not?
  - Would you consider adapting the research (or part of it) to an alternative channel (e.g., podcast, news media, The Conversation, etc.)? Why or why not?

**Session 10: Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 1-2:30pm EST**

Topic 10	Discussion Points	Speakers
Course wrap-up and discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This session will be a roundtable focusing on lived experiences of navigating career paths in the Canadian context as well as advice on making connections, accessing resources, and planning next steps.</li> <li>• Each participant will have the opportunity to discuss the course and ask any additional questions about things they have worked on during the course, and about their career trajectory in Canada</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Boris Vukovic</u></b>, Director, Accessibility Institute, Carleton University</p> <p><b><u>Betina Appel Kuzmarov</u></b>, Associate Vice-President (International), Carleton</p> <p>Members of the AACA Course Advisory Board</p> <p><b><u>Norah Vollmer</u></b>, Manager, Faculty Affairs, Carleton University</p>
<p><b>Things to do after class:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to explore resources at your host institution. Develop your networks and seek out faculty mentors to provide discipline-specific feedback and support.</li> </ul>		

## Appendix A

The following are examples of other resources available at Carleton University. Scholars from universities other than Carleton are strongly encouraged to seek out similar resources at their host institutions.

PLEASE NOTE – Carleton attendees are strongly encouraged to sign up for the following newsletters and attend workshops in their discipline for more detailed and relevant information.

- Research Funding Newsletter Sign-Up <https://carleton.ca/coris/news-events/research-newsletter/vpri-research-funding-newsletter-sign-up/>
- Teaching and Learning Services Newsletter <https://confirmsubscription.com/h/t/44FEE2D852C69E7A>
- Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs Professional Development newsletter <https://carleton.ca/gradpd/list/>
- [National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity \(NCFDD\)](#) (use your Carleton email address)

More Information About Government/Industry Careers

- <https://carleton.ca/gradpd/trajectories/>
- <https://carleton.ca/gradpd/your-career-narrative/>
- [MITACS](#)

Knowledge mobilization resources - <https://carleton.ca/coris/knowledge-mobilization/>

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all those who have generously supported this project with their encouragement, expertise, and enthusiasm for this important initiative.

The Royal Society of Canada

Scholars at Risk (SAR) Carleton

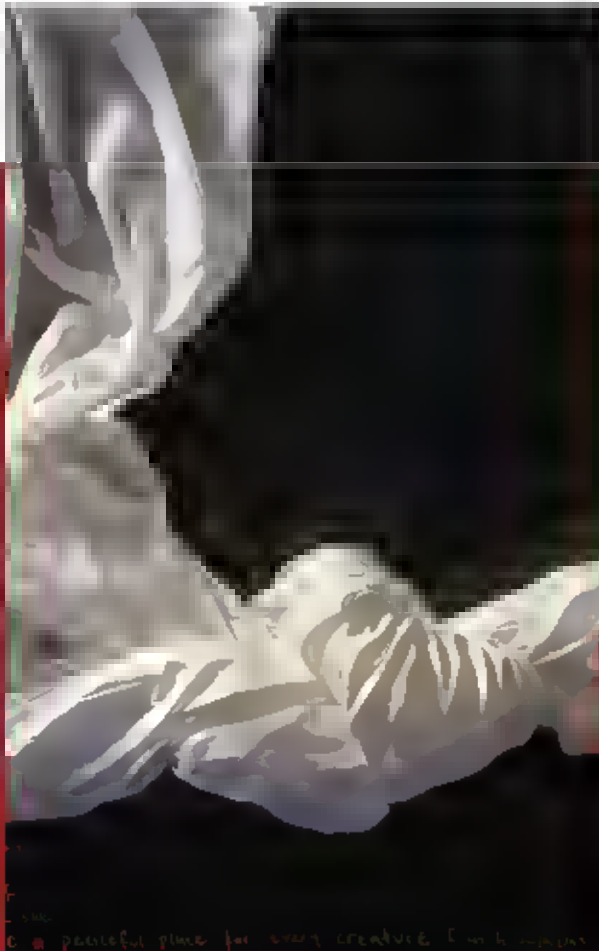
Carleton Teaching and Learning Services

Advisory Board for Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate for New Scholars in Canada

External Program Evaluators for Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate  
for New Scholars in Canada

SAR Donors and Supporters

Presenters and Participants of the Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate for New Scholars in  
Canada



**Carleton**  
University



**MAY**  
**22-23**  
**2025**

**SAFE HAVENS AND KNOWLEDGE NETWORKS  
IN CANADA  
CONFERENCE**





## TERRITORY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to acknowledge that we are hosting this conference on the traditional and unceded territory of the Algonquin nation. This territory acknowledgement recognizes that our presence is in relation to our whole environment – flora, fauna, one another – in addition to the land. We are grateful for the opportunity to be present together, in-person and virtually, on this territory.

The feeling of safety is of the utmost importance to us throughout this conference. While the conversations may make us uncomfortable at times, discomfort is part of the learning and growing process.

## ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

The *Safe Havens and Knowledge Networks in Canada Conference* (May 2025) is a unique moment to draw together academic researchers, non-academic stakeholders, and at-risk and displaced scholars into a galvanizing event that connects international, national, and local perspectives of the universities hosting at-risk scholars and researchers. The conference is supported by the International Development Research Centre's initiative for Democratic and Inclusive Governance (IDRC-DIG). Their commitment to investing in the role of research to finding solutions to issues in the international development sector has helped make this gathering possible. This conference was also made possible by the foundation built by the Carleton University/University of British Columbia Placement, Preservation and Perseverance (PPP) project which focused on Afghan at-risk scholars. Learn more about the project here: [Placement, Preservation and Perseverance: Afghan At-risk Scholars, Activists and Students - Carleton University](#)

This national conference aims to foster dialogue, strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration, and build sustainable systems for protecting global knowledge networks and academic freedom. It foregrounds the role of Canadian universities in supporting displaced scholars and human rights defenders. It will consider contributions to Canadian society, as well as to knowledge networks, conflict resolution, and democratic governance back home. Finally, the conference will draw together key stakeholders to engage in dialogue about the absence of national hosting guidelines and the challenges host institutions face in maintaining momentum.

This hybrid in-person and online conference is designed to engage diverse stakeholders in conversations about pathways to immigration, resettlement, and preservation of knowledge networks for at-risk and displaced scholars and scientists. This conference fulfills Carleton's strategic objective by strengthening Carleton's physical and reputational presence in Ottawa by hosting key stakeholders on national and global levels. But principally, the conference, in acknowledging the simultaneous professional and humanitarian struggles faced by at-risk and displaced scholars and artists, is calling for a national program, like those established in France, Germany, and the UK, to signal Canada's international commitment to intellectual freedom and mobility.

## CONFERENCE AGENDA

### Schedule Day 1

8:30 Arrival and Registration

8:45 Welcome and Opening Remarks

Norah Vollmer, *Manager, Faculty Affairs, Carleton University, SAR Carleton Co-Chair, SAR Canada Steering Committee*

Dr. Megan Graham, *Adjunct Research Professor, Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University*

Dr. Mustafa Bahran, *Professor of Physics, Contract Instructor, Carleton University, SAR Carleton*

Caroline Ford, *Director, Democratic and Inclusive Governance Division, International Development Research Centre*

9:00 Keynote Session: Knowledge Under Siege: The Role of Canadian Universities in Hosting At-Risk Scholars and Human Rights Defenders

Hosted by Nahlah Ayed, *Host/ Producer, CBC Ideas*

Dr. Zahra Nazari, *Visiting Professor, Department of Electronics, Carleton University*

Dr. Mustafa Bahran, *Professor of Physics, Contract Instructor, Carleton University, SAR Carleton*

Professor James Milner, *Political Science, Carleton University, de Mello Chair (UNHCR)*

## CONFERENCE AGENDA

### Schedule Day 1 Continued

**10:00 Session 1: National and International Efforts to Support Researchers at Risk: Challenges, Best Practices, and Future Directions**

**Moderators:**

Professor Andrew Johnston, *History, Carleton University, SAR Carleton Co-Chair, SAR Canada Steering Committee*

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Professor Christine Duff, *French, Carleton University, SAR Carleton Co-Chair*

Dr. Maïke Didero, *Program Manager, Inspire Europe, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Foundation)*

Marion Gues Lucchini, *Advocacy and International Officer, PAUSE programme national d'accueil en urgence des scientifiques et des artistes en exil*

Phoebe Alpern, *Program Associate for Membership and University Relations, Scholars at Risk Network (New York)*

Danielle Alperin, *Assistant Director, Scholar Rescue Fund (New York)*

**11:30 Lunch Break**

**12:15 Session 2: Building Bridges for Displaced Scholars: Building Networks and Improving Policy for Equitable Access to Education and Research**

**Moderator:** Professor James Milner, *Political Science, Carleton University, de Mello Chair (UNHCR)*

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Professor Christina Clark-Kazak, *Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa*

Dr. Evren Altinkas, *Department of History, University of Guelph*

Professor Tony Porter, *Political Science, McMaster University*

Marufa Shinwari, *PhD Candidate, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, McMaster University*

Dr. Elham Gharji, *IDRC Project Research Coordinator, NSERC CREATE LEAP, Contract Instructor (Law and Legal Studies), Carleton University*

## CONFERENCE AGENDA

### Schedule Day 1 Continued

- 1:45 Refreshment Break
- 2:00 **Session 3: The Potential of Employment Pathways as a Route to Canada for Displaced Scholars and Other Talent**
- Moderator: Professor Luciara Nardon, *Business, Carleton University*
- 
- Dana Wagner, *Co-Founder and Managing Director, TalentLift Canada*
- Sandra Elgersma, *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)*
- Bassel Ramli, *Director, Global Mobility, JumpStart Refugee Talent*
- 3:30 **Preserving Academic Freedom in Times of Uncertainty**
- Introduction: Norah Vollmer, *Manager, Faculty Affairs, Carleton University, SAR Carleton Co-Chair, SAR Canada Steering Committee*
- Caroline Ford, *Director, Democratic and Inclusive Governance Division, International Development Research Centre*
- The Honourable Bob Rae, *Permanent Representative and Ambassador of Canada to United Nations in New York and President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council*
- 4:00 **Conclusion of Conference Day One**



## CONFERENCE AGENDA

### Schedule Day 2

8:30 Arrival

8:45 Welcome and Opening

Norah Vollmer, *Manager, Faculty Affairs, Carleton University, SAR Carleton Co-Chair, SAR Canada Steering Committee*

Dr. Megan Graham, *Adjunct Research Professor, Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University*

Dr. Mustafa Bahran, *Professor of Physics, Contract Instructor, Carleton University, SAR Carleton*

9:00 Open Discussion: Responding to Displaced Scholars and Students Affected by Crisis in the United States  
(Session will be for in-person audience only)

Moderator: Professor Laura Madokoro, *History, Carleton University*

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Professor Christina Clark-Kazak, *Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa*

Professor Bree Akesson, *Canada Research Chair (Tier II), Global Adversity and Wellbeing, Faculty of Social Work, Wilfred Laurier University*

Professor Tony Porter, *Political Science, McMaster University*

10:00 Session 4: Navigating New Beginnings: At-Risk and Displaced Scholars' and Artists' Journeys Through Barriers and Solutions in Canada's Employment Landscape

Moderator: Professor Christina Clark-Kazak, *Public and International Affairs, University of Ottawa*

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Professor Doris Kakuru, *Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria*

Dr. Canan Altinkas, *Artist*

Maiwand Rayhab, *Founder and CEO, Resilient Societies*

11:30 Lunch Break

## CONFERENCE AGENDA

### Schedule Day 2 Continued

**12:15 SAR Carleton Initiative – Program Briefing**

Norah Vollmer, *Manager, Faculty Affairs, Carleton University, SAR Carleton Co-Chair, SAR Canada Steering Committee*

Professor Andrew Johnston, *History, Carleton University, SAR Carleton Co-Chair, SAR Canada Steering Committee*

Professor Christine Duff, *French, Carleton University, SAR Carleton Co-Chair*

Dr. Megan Graham, *Adjunct Research Professor, Sociology and Anthropology, Carleton University*

**12:30 Session 5: Youth Perspectives on Displaced Knowledge Networks and Education Landscapes**

(Session will be for in-person audience only)

The session will showcase student presenters from the IDRC-funded Placement, Preservation, and Perseverance (PPP) project who worked under the supervision of Dr. Jenny Peterson at the University of British Columbia.

**1:45 Session 6: Integrating Global Talent: Imagining National Initiatives for At-Risk and Displaced Scholars**

Moderator: Professor Betina Appel Kuzmarov, *Law and Legal Studies, Associate Vice-President (International), Carleton University*

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Professor James Milner, *Political Science, Carleton University, de Mello Chair (UNHCR)*

Bayan Khatib, *Impact Director – Refugee Newcomers, Northpine Foundation*

Nyabuol Biel Gang, *Creative Writer and Advocate*

**3:00 Refreshment Break**

## CONFERENCE AGENDA

### Schedule Day 2 Continued

**3:15**    **Session 7: Full-Circle Insights, Key Takeaways, and Actionable Future Plans**

*Moderator: Professor Catherine Khordoc, French, Deputy Provost (Academic Operations and Planning), Carleton University*

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*Dr. Shuchi Karim, Research Chair Coordinator, IDRC Research Chairs Network on Forced Displacement, Adjunct Research Professor (Sociology and Anthropology), Contract Instructor, Carleton University*

*Caroline Ford, Director, Democratic and Inclusive Governance Division, International Development Research Centre*

*Professor Charles Reeve, Visual and Critical Studies, Associate Dean, Arts & Science, OCAD University, SAR Canada Steering Committee*

*Norah Vollmer, Manager, Faculty Affairs, Carleton University, SAR Carleton Co-Chair, SAR Canada Steering Committee*

**4:00**    **Closing of conference**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Safe Havens Conference would not have been possible without the contributions of many people. We would like to extend our gratitude for the hard work which made this conference a success.

We gratefully recognize the Scholars At-Risk Carleton Co-Chairs Andrew Johnston, Christine Duff, Aaron Doyle, Norah Vollmer, and Adjunct Research Professor Megan Graham, for initiating and leading this year's conference from concept to completion. We would like to acknowledge the work of the conference coordinating team, including Norah Vollmer, Megan Graham, Monserrat Ramirez Ruvalcaba, Temidayo Fawole, Sakib Ahsan, Bana Al Tahir, Randy Boswell, and journalism students and our many wonderful volunteers.

We extend our gratitude to Roula El-Rifai and the Government of Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) for their support of this conference. Their commitment to investing in the role of research to finding solutions to issues in the international development sector has helped make this gathering possible. This conference was also made possible by the foundation built by the Carleton University/University of British Columbia Placement, Preservation and Perseverance (PPP) project.

We would also like to thank and acknowledge the help and support of Provost Pauline Rankin, Associate Vice-President Betina Appel Kuzmarov, the members of the SAR Carleton Committee, and, of course, the larger Carleton community.

Additionally, we would like to acknowledge the strength and courage of our at-risk and displaced scholars, artists, and human rights defenders – the reason we have all gathered for this event. We recognize the difficulties in being acknowledged explicitly, but we thank all who contributed to this conference as consultants, advisors and participants.

Finally, we would like to thank participants and speakers for sharing their experience and expertise, as well as all those who have encouraged us along the way. We hope this conference serves as an opportunity to foster dialogue, strengthen cross-sectoral collaboration, and build sustainable systems for protecting global knowledge networks and academic freedom.

## SUPPORT THE SCHOLARS AT RISK INITIATIVE

### More Information about the Conference

For more information on the conference, including session descriptions, presentation abstracts, and speaker biographies, please use the QR code below.



### Support Scholars at Risk

The Scholars at Risk Initiative protects threatened academics and defends academic freedom worldwide. At a time when university budgets are increasingly constrained and global support for foreign aid is in decline, operational funding is more critical than ever. Our ability to host at-risk scholars and provide meaningful programming depends on sustained core support. To learn more or support the initiative, please visit Carleton's Future Funder website and search for Scholars at Risk, or use the QR code below.



### Conference Program Design

This conference program was designed by Canan Altinkas, PhD. Canan is a multidisciplinary artist, educator, curator, and therapeutic art life coach based in Ontario, Canada. With over 15 years of international experience in fine arts education and community engagement, she brings a deeply reflective and inclusive approach to her creative practice. Holding a doctorate in Fine Arts Education from Turkey's Dokuz Eylül University, Altinkas has taught at universities in Turkey and Cyprus, curated exhibitions such as "Hope Survived" at Queen's University, and currently instructs art classes at different institutions in Kitchener, Ont.

Her work explores resilience, identity, and transformation through a variety of media, often combining artistic expression with therapeutic and social aims. As a former Artist Protection Fund Fellow and an active member of several arts advisory committees in Kitchener, Altinkas continues to champion the role of art in healing, advocacy, and cultural dialogue.



## Key Conference Outputs

- Safe Havens and Knowledge Networks in Canada Conference Website: [Scholars at Risk Conference – Safe Havens and Knowledge Networks in Canada](#)
- News stories written by team of student journalists covering each session [Conference News – Scholars at Risk Conference](#)
- Conference Keynote Session hosted by Tom Howell and presented by Nahlah Ayed on CBC *Ideas*, June 13, 2025: [Canadian universities as safe havens for scholars-in-exile | Ideas | On Demand | CBC Listen](#)
- In-person and online art exhibition by two at-risk and displaced artists: [Art Gallery – Scholars at Risk Conference](#)
- Article in University Affairs: “Responding to the Global Displacement Crisis: A Role for Canadian Universities?” by [Nyabuol Biel Gang, James Milner and Lilly Neang: Responding to the global displacement crisis - University Affairs](#)
- Participation in an event for Global Young Academy – At-Risk Scientists (North America) ([Global Young Academy \(GYA\)- At Risk Scholars initiative](#)), in partnership with The Institute of International Education's Scholar Rescue Fund (IIE-SRF) and the American National Academies / New Voices Program
  - Wednesday, June 17th, 2026: Academic Job Hunting
  - Wednesday, June 17th, 2026: CV Workshop for Academia



Keeping Canada's university community informed, inspired and connected

Opinion | Policy

# Responding to the global displacement crisis

A role for Canadian universities?

By  Nyabuol Biel Gang, James Milner And Lilly Neang

October 22, 2025



Photo credit: iStock.com/Fat Camera



The numbers alone are staggering. As a result of persecution, conflict and human rights violations, the number of displaced people continues to grow every year. This figure reached 123.2 million at the end of 2024, equating to more than 1 in every 69 people being forced to flee their homes worldwide. The global refugee response system is overwhelmed by numbers, a lack of political will to find solutions and a dramatic collapse in donor funding since January 2025.

In light of the scale of this global challenge, is there a role for Canadian universities to help respond? The short answer is yes, because they are already playing an active role. For decades, chapters of the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) have facilitated the Student Refugee Program (SRP) on campuses across Canada. The SRP is a student-led private sponsorship model wherein young refugees are able to access a complementary pathway that combines permanent residency and higher education. With over 95 post-secondary institutions participating across the country, WUSC Local Committees have supported over 2,500 young refugees to continue their education on Canadian campuses since 1978.

For those holding doctoral degrees, the Scholars at Risk (SAR) Network is a collection of institutions and individuals who are dedicated to protecting displaced scholars and promoting academic freedom. SAR Committees offer temporary academic positions at member universities and colleges to those facing severe threats, while also advocating for imprisoned academics, monitoring attacks on higher education, and creating a space for critical discussion on the right to knowledge. Within these programs, there is great potential for new initiatives and collaborative advancement, as seen in the Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate for New Scholars in Canada launched by SAR Carleton in 2024.

Modest scholarships and grants are amongst the other forms of support offered to displaced persons by universities, yet it is clear that there is more that can be done. At a time of such massive global need, how can we build on the foundation of past efforts to reimagine the role of universities in helping respond to global displacement needs?



## Universities as drivers of change

Canadian universities have increasingly acknowledged their privileged role as drivers of positive social change. Even at a time of constrained budgets and enrolment pressures, universities can contribute to responses to displacement and bring experience and expertise to their classrooms by embracing their unique ability to aid displaced students and scholars in times of crisis.

Part of this role is ensuring their programs respond to the particular needs of refugees. In fact, for most refugees and displaced persons, arrival in Canada does not mark an end to their struggles. Overcoming language barriers, validating credentials and accessing professional networks are ongoing challenges that can be extremely disruptive for their careers. In addition to these professional demands, they also have relatives to care for that may still be in situations of precarity. In the university atmosphere, displaced students and scholars are characterized by narratives of loss.

But part of the response also lies in recognizing the many contributions refugees can and do make to their new communities. If we shift our perception of refugees from being passive victims to individuals with valuable experience and contributions to make, we see the wider benefits of increasing access for refugees in Canadian universities. As Canada grapples with challenges relating to its immigration and refugee systems, who better than refugees to advise on workable solutions? Having personally navigated the migration system, there is no one more knowledgeable about the intricacies of the system and its shortcomings. Their lived experience makes them invaluable experts in the field, and their contributions deserve to be championed both in the classroom and beyond.

Refugees also bring skills and talent that can help address labour market needs in Canada. Carleton University recently signed an agreement with Jumpstart Refugee Talent to do just this. Leveraging Carleton University's diverse graduate diploma programs, Carleton and Jumpstart are developing a program where the skills of refugees can help meet talent needs in sectors as diverse as cybersecurity and health technology.

## A necessary role for government



The development of such a new education pathway for refugees is an ambitious area of innovation, but one that universities cannot undertake on their own. There is a critical role for the federal government, especially Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), in unlocking the potential role of Canadian universities in contributing to global displacement responses and fostering the potential contributions that refugees can make to Canadian society and the Canadian economy.

This is a role that the Government of Canada has recognized and a commitment they have already made. At the 2023 Global Refugee Forum in Geneva, Canada pledged to develop an educational pathway program to enable refugees to be selected to study at Canadian post-secondary institutions and have a pathway to permanent residency. In December 2025, Canada will be back in Geneva to report on steps it has taken to fulfill its commitments at the Global Refugee Forum Progress Review meeting.

This is not only a global commitment, however, but a domestic mandate: one of the seven priorities of the current government, as detailed in the May 2025 Mandate Letter from Prime Minister Carney, is for the government to attract to Canada “the best talent in the world to help build our economy...” Refugees can bring that talent. Universities can help support and develop that talent to contribute to more vibrant campuses, partner with employers to match that talent to labour market needs, thus contributing to the economy and the betterment of society as a whole.

It is not simply charitable to protect and support displaced persons, but rather a strategic investment in global talent. It is critical that we remind ourselves that displacement, however disruptive, is not erasure; those seeking protection are brilliant scholars, masterful artists, courageous entrepreneurs and visionary activists who bring valuable skills to Canada.

The need has never been greater, and the time to act is now.





## Nyabuol Biel Gang, James Milner and Lilly Neang

Nyabuol Biel Gang is a student in the Bachelor of Global and International Studies at Carleton University and a former member of the Refugee Education Council advising Canada's Minister of International Development. James Milner is a professor of Political Science and Director of the Migration and Diaspora Studies at Carleton University. He is also Project Director of LERRN: The Local Engagement Refugee Research Network and Canada's first De Mello Chair. Lilly Neang is a student in the MA in Migration and Diaspora Studies program at Carleton University, where she is also Co-Chair of the WUSC Student Refugee Program Local Committee.

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# From Displacement to Reestablishment: Are At-Risk Scholars Meaningfully Supported in Canada?

## Executive Summary

This policy brief draws from the Placement, Preservation, and Perseverance (PPP) project that was created to support Afghan at-risk scholars and activists after the Taliban regained control in 2021. The project tackled a fast-moving set of needs: protecting academic freedom, preserving displaced knowledge, rebuilding scholarly careers, and setting the groundwork for a national coordination in Canada. For more information, see the original PPP Final Report: <https://carleton.ca/scholars-at-risk/>

PPP placed scholars at six Canadian universities. Activists produced toolkits, platforms, and media projects that protected cultural memory and civic knowledge with a small budget. A new certificate course helped scholars re-enter academic life in Canada while a Community of Care model addressed mental health and belonging.

The project also uncovered critical system shortfalls. Ethics boards delayed student research. Scholars struggled through slow immigration, unclear institutional processes, and inconsistent funding. Small grants delivered high-impact outcomes but, few institutions had the flexibility to scale that success. No coordinated national mechanism exists to guide work or sustain high impact initiatives.

Canada risks wasting the expertise of internationally trained scholars. Many remain underemployed. This brief calls for a national strategy with sustainable funding, trauma-informed training, and strong support systems to help displaced scholars contribute meaningfully to Canadian academia.

**Author:** Ali Shaker, Carleton University

**Research Supported by:** The International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

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## Introduction

Following the Taliban's return to power in 2021, hundreds of Afghan scholars fled and remain in intermediary countries. They face isolation and the potential of losing their careers. Canada lacks a coordinated system for their safe arrival and reintegration. The PPP project studies short term solutions to inform national policy.



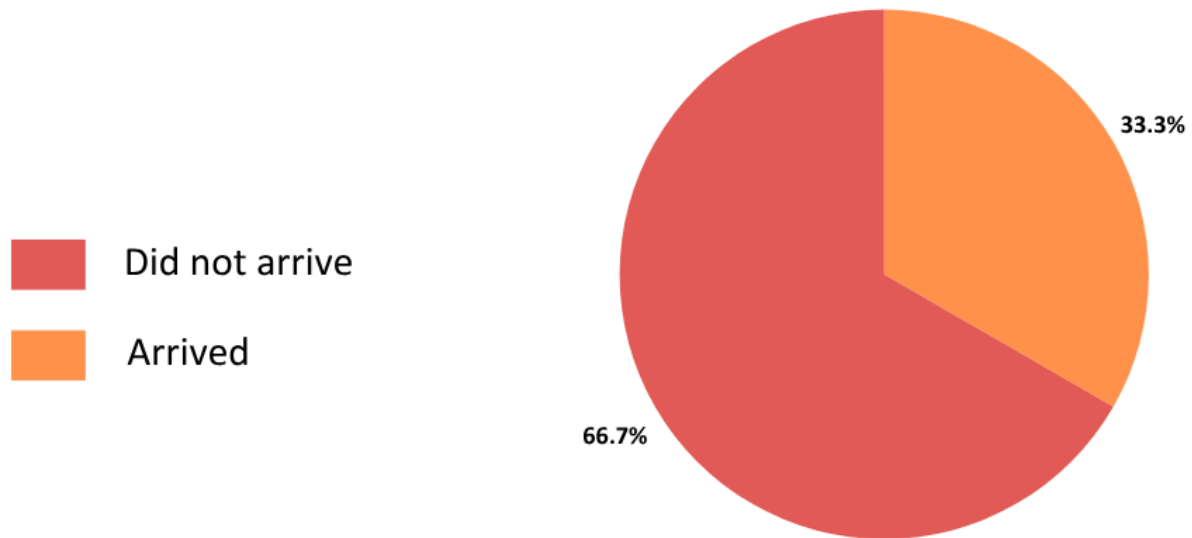
## Overview

- Draws on the PPP project (2022–2024) led by Carleton University and six partner universities
- Included the placement of six Afghan scholars
- Funded seven activist-led initiatives
- Evaluated a certificate program and a Community of Care model
- Evidence was generated through practical implementation
- Findings were shaped by delays in scholar arrivals and uneven institutional capacities

## Findings

- **Scholar Placement Outcomes** Although the PPP project supported six Afghan scholars, only two were able to assume academic roles in Canada due to immigration delays. Scholars were placed across six universities. One later secured a permanent academic position. She cited strong mentorship and clear institutional support as key to navigating academic systems and securing the role. This success indicates the long-term value of targeted academic support.

## SCHOLAR'S WHO SUCCESSFULLY ARRIVED TO CANADA VS THOSE WHO DID NOT



Source: Final Report of the Placement, Preservation, and Perseverance (PPP) Project, 2023.

- **Impact of Activist Projects** PPP funded seven projects led by ten Afghan activists, eight of whom were women, working in journalism, education, health, child rights, legal reform, and tech. Despite small budgets, these projects enabled displaced professionals to continue their work and share critical knowledge. Outputs included toolkits, digital platforms, legal manuals, and media.

Several standout projects illustrate the scale of impact:

**1. Child Rights Toolkit: an advocacy guide in Dari and Pashto.**

**WOMEN  
in tech**  
Afghanistan

**datacamp**  
DONATES



“ As a young woman passionate about technology, I've always been captivated by its possibilities. Despite many challenges, I've never lost sight of my dream to join the global tech community. With the support of Women in Tech Afghanistan, I'm now on the path to achieving my goals.

Through their guidance, I've taken courses in software development, AI, data science, and machine learning via DataCamp. My goal is to use these skills to develop innovative solutions that solve real-world problems, especially for communities like mine.

By mastering these fields, I hope to inspire more Afghan girls to enter tech and make a meaningful impact. The future is full of opportunities, and I'm ready to embrace them.

”

**Masuda Shams**

Image courtesy of Women in Tech



**2. Women in Tech: a digital hub to empower Afghan women in STEM.**

**3. Nimrokh Media: research on women's political movements.**



Image courtesy of Nimrokh Media



Image courtesy of chuffed.org

- **Professional Development and Training** PPP supported scholar re-entry through targeted training, including the Academic Advancement and Career Alignment Certificate developed with Carleton University and Scholars at Risk. The course covered Canadian academic systems, grant writing, publishing, ethics, and career pathways. Participants, including Royal Society of Canada's At-Risk and Displaced Academics and Artists (ARDA) alumni, also attended writing workshops and received UBC mentorship. Post-event evaluation data showed increased confidence in resumes, research, and grant writing. While most goals were met, scholars suggested adding more hands-on components to bridge theory and practice.
- **Mental Health and Community Support** Displacement took a toll on scholars' mental health. Institutions on the other hand lacked culturally appropriate services or trauma-informed care. PPP introduced a Community of Care model that combined mentorship, peer support, and counselling referrals. This helped scholars manage stress and remain engaged. One university covered housing and food for nearly a year while a scholar waited in limbo. Such unpredictable events highlight the strain on institutions and the effectiveness of early, coordinated supports.
- **Barriers to Immigration and Mobility** Immigration delays were the PPP project's most pressing barrier. Only two of six scholars arrived in Canada before the project ended. Others remained in third countries for months or faced deportation, visa denials, or security delays. One scholar waited nearly a year while the host university covered basic expenses. Scholars without ties to their home institutions, a common situation in forced displacement, were excluded from work permits. Additionally, institutions lacked immigration expertise and some created remote fellowships instead. These barriers echo broader patterns of exclusion faced by skilled newcomers in Canada (Shaker, 2025).
- **Challenges with Ethics Review Processes** Student researchers faced long ethics delays and unclear feedback, especially when proposing trauma-related topics. Some withdrew from the project. Ethics boards struggled to assess proposals grounded in community-based or trauma-informed research and mentors had limited guidance to support them. These challenges suggest

a gap in support for trauma-aware and culturally sensitive research processes. particularly when projects involve difficult lived experiences.

- **Effectiveness of Small-Scale Funding** The success of activist-led outputs shows the value of small-scale funding that is tailored for tangible resources. These outputs had wide reach and policy relevance. The results show that small, flexible grants can deliver high-impact results when funding is timely and tailored to the needs of displaced professionals.
- **Need for National Coordination to Streamline Support** Without national coordination, each university developed its own systems for scholar onboarding, supervision, and support. This led to duplication of efforts, uneven support across campuses, and administrative delays. In addition, staff frequently took on roles that were outside their mandate to fill gaps. A centralized SAR hub or referral mechanism would reduce institutional burden and promote equity. Additionally, several PPP-supported projects were led by women or focused on gender equity. This reinforcing the need for systems that are inclusive.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations organized below center on the policy structures as well as the whole-person realities of displaced scholars.

- *Create a National Coordination Mechanism*
- *Introduce Dedicated Immigration Pathways*
- *Support Ethics and Research Training*
- *Small grants for activists' projects.*
- *Mental health care, with attention to gender-specific needs.*

The following recommendations organized below center on the policy structures as well as the whole-person realities of displaced scholars.

### ***Create a National Coordination Mechanism***

Canada should establish a centralized SAR hub that is led by a university or NGO in partnership with Immigration, Refugee, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and Innovation, Science, and Economic Development (ISED). Together, they will manage scholar referrals, vetting, and onboarding across institutions. The PPP project revealed duplicated efforts, uneven support, and ad hoc processes that strained university resources. A national body would streamline placements, reduce institutional burden, and ensure more equitable integration. The global Scholars at Risk network, with over 650 member universities, offers a scalable coordination model that Canada can adapt to reduce fragmentation and strengthen academic reintegration (Scholars at Risk, 2024).

### ***Introduce Dedicated Immigration Pathways***

IRCC should create a fast-track immigration stream for at-risk scholars. Current policies rely heavily on postdoctoral criteria and employer sponsorship. These measures act as barriers for senior scholars, those without PhDs, and individuals who fled without formal documentation. Even when placements were secured, the PPP project showed that these limitations still delayed or prevented scholar arrivals. Having a dedicated pathway will offer displaced scholars a realistic path to contribute their expertise in Canada.

### ***Support Ethics and Research Training***

Universities and funding agencies should expand training on trauma-informed and community-based research practices. During the PPP project, ethics review boards struggled to evaluate proposals involving displacement and lived experience. This caused delays, confusion, and project withdrawals. Providing clear, accessible guidance for both reviewers and displaced scholars will improve timelines and support high-quality research. Furthermore, aligning ethics processes with real-world researcher needs strengthens inclusion and upholds research integrity.

### ***Additional supports should include:***

- . Small, flexible grants to sustain displaced scholars' and activists' projects.
- . Trauma-informed, culturally relevant mental health care, with attention to gender-specific needs.

## Conclusion

The PPP project revealed both the potential and precarious nature of guiding displaced scholars in Canada. While they bring valuable knowledge, much goes untapped due to fragmented systems and uncoordinated support. Canada has the opportunity to lead with an inclusive strategy that addresses gender-specific barriers and enables scholars, especially women scholars, to fully participate in academic life. Key needs include timely immigration, training, flexible funding, and national coordination. These measures will help scholars move from survival to meaningful contribution to Canadian academic knowledge. Without action, Canada risks losing the immense contributions that these scholars could make to its academic institutions and society. With the right systems, Canada can lead in supporting displaced academic talent globally.

*This policy brief was authored by Ali Shaker, PhD, in collaboration with the SAR–Carleton team. While not a core researcher on the original PPP project, the author conducted an in-depth review of the final report and annexes to independently synthesize key policy insights.*

