

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **AFI Surpasses Commitment Milestone in Afghan Artists Resettlement Initiative**

**NEW YORK** – This week, Artistic Freedom Initiative (AFI) announced that the organization has surpassed its initial resettlement commitment to support the legal relocation of at-risk Afghan artists and their families through its [Afghan Artists Protection Project](#) (AAPP), taking on the cases of 70 Afghan artists so far in 2022. Including artists' family members, AFI is resettling a total of 229 Afghans.

Launched in January 2022 with funding from the [Mellon Foundation](#), AAPP was created to respond to the growing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan following the United States' withdrawal last year. That initial investment made the U.S. relocation and resettlement of 23 artists and 38 family members possible through [AAPP US](#), and additional funding through the SDK Foundation for Human Dignity provided generous support for 47 Afghan artists and 121 family members to be relocated to Germany via [AAPP Europe](#).

AAPP supports the safe relocation and resettlement of Afghan artists who are increasingly threatened under Taliban rule, and allows them to preserve their livelihoods as artists in the United States. While AFI initially committed to taking on the legal resettlement cases of 18 Afghan artists and their families, the organization has proudly surpassed that goal and will continue its work assisting Afghan refugees through the holistic resettlement program.

The following statements are attributable to [Ashley Tucker](#) and [Sanjay Sethi](#), co-executive directors of AFI:

“We created AAPP to provide Afghan artists at risk not only with the safety and security of legal resettlement, but with the opportunity to continue their careers in the US with their families by their side, free from persecution and harm under the Taliban,” said **Ashley Tucker**. “We are elated to be able to support the safe relocation of 23 artists, proudly exceeding our original commitment, and we’re looking forward to growing that number in the coming months. We could not be more grateful to have the support of our friends at the Mellon Foundation, which has allowed us to restore hope to Afghan artists who have faced unspeakable challenges to leave their homes for a better life.”

“Even a year after the U.S. withdrawal, the need for humanitarian and immigration assistance for individuals still fleeing Afghanistan continues to grow in volume and urgency,” said **Sanjay Sethi**. “We feel proud to be able to provide necessary support for persecuted Afghan artists who are awaiting safe relocation for themselves and their families, both to the United States and now in Europe. AAPP has allowed us not only to help dozens of Afghan artists at risk, but also to forge partnerships with leading institutions that have generously opened their doors to Afghan artists and given them the opportunity to continue enriching our lives and cultures with their work for years to come.”

If you are interested in speaking further with representatives of AFI about the Afghan Artists Protection Project, or its ongoing work to protect artistic freedom globally, please contact us at [info@artisticfreedominitiative.org](mailto:info@artisticfreedominitiative.org).

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**About Artistic Freedom Initiative:** Artistic Freedom Initiative (AFI) is dedicated to safeguarding the right to artistic freedom that facilitates pro bono immigration representation and resettlement assistance for international artists at risk. [Learn more here.](#)