



The Salt Lake County (SLCo) Office for New Americans (ONA) respectfully requests Open Society Foundation funding in the amount of \$200,000 to serve up to 765 refugees and fulfill Operation Afghan Resettlement Support (OARS), a 12 month community partnership to meet the urgent resettlement needs of arriving Afghans. With full funding, the OARS project will provide urgent essential resources that propel Afghan refugees to successful integration in Salt Lake County.

Salt Lake County is the nation's first Certified Welcoming County and has prioritized the establishment and growth of relationships with community organizations that support refugees and immigrants. As a proven project leader with a AAA Bond Rating, SLCo will receive, apportion, fulfill, account, and report to meet the project's stated objectives and Open Society Foundation requirements.

The OARS project director, SLCo ONA New American and Refugee Liaison Joseph Genda, came to Utah as a refugee from Sierra Leone in 2007. Through his lived experience and commitment to serve fellow refugees, he possesses the unique ability to convene partners and generate resources to best serve our arriving Afghan refugees. Joseph also participates in the established and ongoing statewide efforts of the Utah Refugee Providers Association and serves on the Utah Refugee Advisory Board.

To meet the needs of Afghan refugees resettling in Salt Lake County, OARS proposes to:

**1. Catalyze local responsiveness efforts by leveraging partnerships.** Salt Lake County will leverage its Certified Welcoming status to serve as the OARS convener of community partnerships, led by the SLCo Office for New Americans. Our partners include:

**Salt Lake County Office for New Americans** will serve as the OARS project lead and leverage County Services to best serve our new Afghan residents.

**Catholic Community Services** Refugee Resettlement program will provide case management, job placement, health services, interpretation, transportation, housing, food assistance, and more in an effort to empower Afghan refugees to reach self-sufficiency.

**International Rescue Committee**, a refugee resettlement agency, will provide high-quality legal assistance to reunite Afghan families in Salt Lake County.

**Utah Muslim Civic League** will also provide high-quality legal assistance to reunite Afghan families in Salt Lake County. Additionally, it will coordinate legal services with the USCIS Salt Lake City Field Office and provide payment for the legal fees associated to the application process required to bring family members from Afghanistan to Salt Lake County.

**Salt Lake City Know Your Neighbor** is a partnership between the Salt Lake City Mayor's Office of Equity and Inclusion and the State Refugee Services Office. Know Your Neighbor will provide Afghan refugees with local volunteers to assist in assimilating and creating a welcoming and inclusive environment.

**Salt Lake County Sheriff's Department** will host Afghan Refugee Welcoming Events to foster trust and build relationships, provide safety training and cultural experiences, and introduce local laws.

**2. Fill urgent gaps related to critical basic needs, communication and coordination, housing, healthcare, education, and legal services.** As a result of decrescent or inadequate funding across all OARS partners, OARS requests funding to fill urgent needs in these service categories:

**Basic Needs** includes the purchase and provision of school supplies (a quality backpack, pencils, writing pads, and specific grade-level requirements) for 100 Afghan refugee students, emergency kits for 250 arriving Afghan refugee households, and the SLCo Sheriff's Afghan Refugee Welcoming Events.

**Salt Lake County Office for New Americans**

2001 South State Street, Suite N2-100 | PO Box 144575 | Salt Lake City, UT 84114 | (385) 468-4861 | [jgenda@slco.org](mailto:jgenda@slco.org)

**Communications and Coordination** encompasses the addition of a project coordinator to support OARS activities across the County, and, with oversight, administer the public-private funding pool created by generous Open Society Foundation funding and Salt Lake County’s Afghan refugee services budget. It additionally includes the development and distribution of key messaging in Afghan languages by the SLCo Office for New Americans, using OARS partners’ and their extended networks of social media platforms for distribution.

**Critical Housing Needs** will be coordinated through SLCo Housing and Community Development, which will identify available temporary and/or permanent housing for eligible Afghan refugees. Additionally, International Rescue Committee and Catholic Community Services fundraising will be made available to assist in rental fee payments.

**Healthcare**, specifically fees associated to COVID-19, mental health, and trauma screenings. Catholic Community Services and International Rescue Committee volunteers generously provide appointment coordination and transportation services for screenings.

**Education** includes services that provide pathways to employment, particularly driver’s education and workplace English and/or ESL programs. Driver’s education and English language skills are imperative to local integration and the ability to seek and gain employment.

**Legal** assistance includes the payment of application fees associated to the USCIS family immigration process including the Application Type A filing fee and, if applicable, biometric fees for approximately 38 Afghan refugees.

**3. Coordinate, generate, and distribute urgent resources needed for welcoming and integration efforts.**

OARS partners are actively working together to welcome Afghan refugees to the Salt Lake County community. Through our current efforts with early Afghan arrivals, the proactive identification of service and funding gaps included in our proposal was possible. To bridge these gaps, we intend to coordinate, generate, and distribute the urgent resources that will support the integration of Afghan refugees in Salt Lake County. OARS is committed to continuously evaluating the needs of arriving Afghan refugees, re-evaluating our partnership efforts, and measuring the effectiveness of our services.

<b>OARS Project Budget</b>		
<b>Budget Item</b>	<b>Budget \$</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Basic Needs</b>	\$37,230	Refugee emergency kits (\$28,750); School supplies (\$6,480); SLCo Sheriff’s Afghan Refugee Welcoming Events (\$2,000)
<b>Communications and Coordination</b>	\$60,000	Project Coordinator (based with OARS Know Your Neighbor partner); SLCo labor associated with OARS communications
<b>Project Coordinator Travel</b>	\$1,000	0.585 cents per mile at an average of 33 miles per week for Project Coordinator's travel to provide refugee services (based on SLCo 2022 mileage reimbursement rate).
<b>Housing</b>	\$25,000	Temporary to permanent rent assistance
<b>Healthcare</b>	\$26,770	COVID-19, mental health, and trauma screenings
<b>Education</b>	\$25,000	Driver’s education and English language education
<b>Legal</b>	\$25,000	Application fees required for family immigration
<b>Total Cost</b>	\$200,000	