

# kindle project



## Kishti

### Kindle Project Afghanistan Fund

Kishti - Kindle Project Afghanistan Fund provides grants to unique, creative, and persevering organizations and initiatives who support women and girls, artists, musicians, activists, and journalists who are at risk inside Afghanistan or have recently relocated outside the country.

Join us in our 3rd year of Kishti!

We are coming up on the two-year anniversary of the US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the Taliban takeover of the country. We are also coming up on the two-year anniversary of the launch of Kishti, Kindle Project's Afghanistan Fund. Kishti was born in response to the catastrophic situation Afghans faced as international support suddenly suspended. The needs for Afghans were immense and Kindle Project saw an opportunity to create a pathway for donors to contribute. To date Kindle Project has raised over \$600,000. We have provided 22 grants to 17 organizations working inside and outside Afghanistan who provide vital services to Afghans. We are pleased to announce that our Kishti Fund will remain open for a 3rd year and this year we are welcoming donations of any size. Donations can be made online, by check, or wire. For more information please visit [kindleproject.org/give-now](https://www.kindleproject.org/give-now).

### Background

The crisis in Afghanistan is largely a result of failed foreign policy. Since the chaotic withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan two years ago, Afghans continue to endure unprecedented challenges within and outside the country as the situation worsens. Afghans most at risk have been those who fought the hardest to foster tolerance, cultural diversity and richness, human rights, and accountability for the past 20 years.

Activists, local journalists and media organizations, human rights workers, and women have been targeted and persecuted. Taliban leadership has barred women from working and closed schools for women and girls. Over 40 years of war has also meant that there is a disproportionate number of households where women are the only surviving breadwinners for their families. The country has plunged into a humanitarian crisis of catastrophic proportions. There is a dire shortage of food, fuel, and employment opportunities across the country.

Although the news cycle has shifted, Afghans need more support than ever before. In the wake of the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan, Kindle Project remains committed. Right now there are opportunities to offer joy, encouragement, safety, change, and chances for Afghans. Through our fund, we continue to provide a metaphorical kishti - a boat - for those in turbulent waters - as we seek and support people on the ground who bring respite and second chances in very tangible and human-to-human ways.

### **Intent of the Kishti Fund**

In the wake of the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan, Kindle Project remains committed to supporting marginalized women and girls, as well as organizations engaged in freedom of expression initiatives with Afghan artists, activists, musicians, and journalists who are at risk inside the country or have managed to relocate outside the country.

We know that the people on the ground best know how to use funds, and therefore we offer general operating grants to organizations. We provide grants to organizations and initiatives inside and outside Afghanistan that:

- focus on freedom of expression, including artists, musicians, journalists, and activists;
- provide support (such as psychosocial and/or material support) for women who have lost a means for income, or who are at risk for the work they once did (judges, activists, journalists, and so forth);
- provide safety and support for women and girls, artists, musicians, local citizen journalists, and activists using expression as a means for accountability and change;
- use arts and education to empower women and youth (especially girls);
- operate with smaller budgets than the large mainstream aid agencies and are likely to be overlooked and underfunded.

### **Why this focus?**

- Artists, activists, journalists, and empowered women are critical to a healthy, vibrant, and stable society.
- These individuals have fought to uplift an open, accountable, tolerant Afghan identity.
- These individuals are under specific threat in the current environment in Afghanistan.

### **Background of Kindle Project's Afghanistan Fund**

In 2021, with the generous outpouring of support from individuals and foundations, we raised double our initial goal for a total of \$500,000 in a matter of months. You can read more about the [first round of the fund here](#).



Since the US withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021, we've supported 17 organizations inside and outside Afghanistan. You can learn more about some of these organizations [here](#). Please note that many organizations must remain confidential for safety concerns and are therefore not publicly acknowledged. Should you require more information on these organizations, please contact Kindle Project directly.

### **Who is Kindle Project?**

Kindle Project is a women-founded, women of color led, agile philanthropic organization. We are invested in democratized, collaborative, and strategic grantmaking that aligns donors and projects for meaningful impact.

The Fund is spearheaded by Nellika Little, Sadaf Rassoul Cameron, and Arianne Shaffer. Nellika has been with Kindle Project for 8 years. In addition to her work with us, she continues to work with international aid agencies. She has spent close to 35 years living and working in Afghanistan, including during years when the country was under Taliban control. She is deeply familiar with the realities on the ground, the organizations that continue to operate, and the nuances of the needs and obstacles for Afghans in crisis. Sadaf co-founded Kindle Project, where she has served as Executive Director for the past 14 years. Born in New Mexico, Sadaf is of Afghan descent on her mother's side. As a documentary photographer and artist, Sadaf has traveled to, documented, and had two solo shows covering Afghan refugee camps and the 1949 Partition of Pakistan and India. Arianne has been working with Kindle Project for the past ten years and is currently the Director of Participatory Programs. Arianne was previously Co-Executive Director at EDGE Funders Alliance, and has a background in peacebuilding, interfaith dialogue and documentary film.

We have extensive networks both inside and outside of Afghanistan, as well as firsthand experience with numerous organizations who qualify for funds under this program. This includes the knowledge and experience of close friends and allies of Kindle Project who have their own networks and ground-level understanding of the situation.

For further information or questions

Please reach out to Sadaf at [sadaf@kindleproject.org](mailto:sadaf@kindleproject.org).

