

TALLINN UNIVERSITY

Nazira Bostoeva, Lili-Ann Bürkland, Triin Gede, Syed Ali Hassan, Katriann Kaasik,  
Chongbin Li, Eliine Porval

ACADEMIC CONFERENCE ABOUT WOMEN IN IRAN

“WOMAN, LIFE, FREEDOM”

Request for project funding to TLU Student Union

Tallinn 2022

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## 1. ACADEMIC CONFERENCE ABOUT WOMEN IN IRAN

### 1.1. Purpose of the Conference

A person regardless of gender and nation should not be killed for what he or she wears. Unfortunately, this is a harsh reality for women in Iran, associated with the authoritarian government of the country. Since 1979, women in Iran have lost the ability to choose what to wear due to the introduction of “shariat laws” as the country's official legal system. Since then, women living in Iran have been subjected to periodic violations of their rights. (Rodriguez et al, 2022)

As a result, the death of one of the women, resulting from a severe beating by the Iranian “morality” police for improperly wearing Mahsa Amini's hijab, sparked protests across the country and global solidarity. Mahsa Amini was a 22-year-old Kurdish woman who was beaten to death by Iranian police on September 16 for not properly wearing a hijab. Amini's case highlighted the ongoing oppression and injustice faced by women in Iran and provoked protests by citizens dissatisfied with the regime, as well as citizens dissatisfied with the country's current economic situation. (Article 19, 2022)

For more than a month, Iranian women and young people in general have been taking to the streets, burning their hijabs, cutting their hair and demanding women's rights and freedom of choice. The authorities cut off the Internet and violently suppressed the protests. According to the latest information, the authorities plan to execute all citizens involved in the protests, even though hundreds of people have to be executed. (Motamedi, 2022)

It is up to all of us to support Iran’s people in their current fight against the regime’s human rights violations. Solidarity has been shown by thousands of people around the world in major cities including Paris, Los Angeles and Toronto (Article 19, 2022). We believe if more countries around the globe condemn Iran’s dictatorship and take decisive action, the political nature could change.

In our project, we want to organize a conference to raise awareness of the violations of the rights and freedoms of women in Iran, to express solidarity with the brave women in Iran who took to the streets to peacefully protest the death in custody of Mahsa (Jina) Amini and demand

their bodily rights. As Global Citizens, we can show solidarity by sharing a message on why to stand with the women of Iran.

## 1.2. Introduction of the Team

The conference would be organized by seven Tallinn University students from different specialties:

- Triin Gede – studies Health Promotion in Tallinn University Haapsalu college and works as a senior consultant for international innovation projects. Believes that a healthy mind and healthy body are largely affected by the environment we live in. This is the reason we have to fight for people's rights all over the world so everyone could have the freedom of choice and possibility to live their lives peacefully regardless of their gender or colour of skin. In the event will be the main coordinator.
- Katriann Kaasik – studies Communication Management in The Baltic Film, Media and Arts School. Has a background in fashion and design, while studying in the Estonian Academy of Arts. Hence, Katriann is a strategic and logical thinker who simultaneously values a creative approach and an „out-of-the-box“ mentality. In the event will be the main coordinator for communication planning and activities.
- Nazira Bostoeva – studies Educational Innovation and Leadership in Tallinn University. Background in after school teaching and opening private classes in rural areas. Has ideas to develop education and support kids in rural areas. Would like to develop different educational projects for kids in rural areas in Kyrgyzstan. In the event will help the main coordinator.
- Chongbin Li – studies Politics and Governance in Tallinn University. He has experience in teaching, debating and managing organizational communications, book-keeping and public relations. He aspires to contribute to tackling human rights problems and promoting social equality. In the event will be responsible for accounting, helps also main coordinator if necessary.
- Lili-Ann Bürkland – studies Psychology in Tallinn University. Has experience in communications and activities planning. In the event will help the main coordinator, for example communication with conference speakers.

- Eliine Porval – studies Theory of Culture in Tallinn University. Has experience in marketing and communications. Currently works as a sales manager. Cares about helping people tell their story, because everyone has something worthwhile to say, it is about finding the correct form and people to tell it to. In the event is part of the communications team, responsible for social media planning.
- Syed Ali Hassan – studies Communication Management in Tallinn University and works as a Treasury Operations Specialist at Wise (Formerly TransferWise). He also has an educational background in Finance. In the event, he will be part of the communications team and will also be focusing on the finance and budgeting aspect of the event.

### 1.3. Time Plan

The conference would take place in February 2023 in the beginning of the semester so there could be maximum number of participants. The event would take place in Tallinn University Mare building (Uus-Sadama 5), Tallinn auditorium (M218). We expect approximately 150 participants from Tallinn University, both students and staff are welcome to join. People can also participate through Zoom coverage and Facebook live, where we expect to have approximately 100 participants. The event would be free of charge, because we want this message to reach as many as possible. Conference stakeholders would be Iranian students and Iranian people overall.

Estimated schedule would be following:

- 10.30-11.00 Registration
- 11.00-11.15 Welcome and keynote by the host Sandra Peets who is Iranian foreign policy expert and PhD student in Cultural Studies in Tallinn University
- 11.15-12.30 Women rights in Iran and open questions in the end by Representative of the Estonian Iranian community Marmar Mehrparvar and Iranian foreign policy expert Sandra Peets
- 12.30-13.30 Lunch (Mare III floor Atrium)
- 13.30-14.30 Video collage about protests and women rights in Iran and open discussion in the end by communication expert, Estonian journalist and journalism lecturer Barbi Pilvre and human rights activist, Estonian journalist Hille Hanso

- 14.30-14.45 Break
- 14.45-16.00 Life in Iran by Iran students (2-3 Iran students talk about their point of view regarding this topic and life in Iran) and open questions in the end
- 16.00-16.30 Conclusions by the host Sandra Peets who is Iranian foreign policy expert and PhD student in Cultural Studies in Tallinn University
- 16.30-17.00 Socialization & networking event with coffee and cake

#### 1.4. Communication Action Plan

Communication action plan is divided into three parts and is written out in the following sections.

##### 1.4.1. Pre-Event Phase

In the pre-event phase, all necessary preparations would be made like creating event home page, sending out invites to the conference speakers, sending out press release etc. All main actions, timeline, channel, target audience and responsible persons are shown in table 1.

Table 1. Pre-Event Phase

<b>Description of activity</b>	<b>Channel</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Target audience</b>	<b>Responsible person</b>
Creating an event landing page	TLU website	End of November 2022	TLU students, staff and others interested in the event	Syed (in collaboration with TLU Communication and Marketing Department)
Sending out invites to the conference speakers	Email/ phone call	End of November 2022	Iranian students in TLU/ other universities in Tallinn	Lili-Ann

<b>Description of activity</b>	<b>Channel</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Target audience</b>	<b>Responsible person</b>
Contacting the conference speakers for confirmation	Phone call	End of November 2022	Iranian students in TLU / other universities in Tallinn	Lili-Ann
Creating a teaser “Save the Date” social media post	TLU Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn	Beginning of December 2022	TLU students, staff and others interested in the event	Eliine
Creating an event hashtag	TLU Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn	Beginning of December 2022	TLU students, staff and others interested in the event	Eliine
Sending out invites	TLU email list	Beginning of December 2022	TLU students and staff	Triin
Creating a Facebook event	TLU SOGOLAS Institute Facebook page	January 2023	Everyone interested in the event	Eliine
Boosting and advertising on social media	Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn	December 2022 until the event	TLU students, staff and others interested in the event	Katriann
Advertising (creating posters and flyers)	Indoor areas of the university and surrounding outdoor areas (bus stop, courtyard)	December 2022 until the event	TLU students, staff and by-passers interested in the topic	Katriann
Sending out a press release	Online and print newspapers	Two weeks prior to the event	The larger public interested in the topic	Chongbin

### 1.4.2. Event Launch and Event Phase

In the event launch and event phase are all necessary activities that are required to make the event seen and heard, mainly keeping the social media accounts updated with ongoing event. All main actions, timeline, channel, target audience and responsible persons are shown in table 2.

Tabel 2. Event Launch and Event Phase

<b>Description of Activity</b>	<b>Channel</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Target audience</b>	<b>Responsible person</b>
Setting up and announcing the online LIVE conference streaming	TLU SOGOLAS Institute Facebook page and SOGOLAS Instagram and Twitter	Two weeks prior to the event	Event attendants, TLU students and staff	Triin
Updating the event landing page	TLU website	December 2022 until the event / monthly	TLU students, staff and others interested in the event	Syed
Updating the Facebook event with detailed information (Zoom link, parking, catering, schedule, etc.)	Facebook	Once in December, January, two weeks prior, a week prior, two days prior the event	TLU students, staff and others interested in the event	Eliine
Creating social media posts about conference speakers, event details, interesting facts about the topic, etc.	TLU Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn	Beginning of December until the event / weekly	Event attendants, TLU students and staff	Katriann
Creating social media stories and reels live from the event	TLU Instagram and Facebook	February 2021	Event attendants, TLU students and staff	Katriann, Eliine



### 1.4.3. Post-Event Phase

In the post-event phase are activities to summarize the event like releasing a video about the conference and publishing an article about the event. All main actions, timeline, channel, target audience and responsible persons are shown in table 3.

Tabel 3. Post-Event Phase

<b>Description of activity</b>	<b>Channel</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Target audience</b>	<b>Responsible person</b>
Creating a “Thank You” post	Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, website	A day post event	Event attendants	Eliine
Releasing a longer video of the conference	TLU Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube	A week post event	Event attendants, TLU students and staff, others interested in the topic	Katriann and Syed
Organizing a speaker from the event to talk on TLU TV series “Ekspert eetris” (“Expert on air”)	Postimees TV (later available on YouTube, Spotify, Soundcloud)	Two weeks post event	TLU students and staff, other university students	Lili-Ann and Triin
Publishing an article about the topic and event	TLU magazine	Spring 2023	TLU students and staff	Chongbin

### 1.5. Fundraiser

One possibility to support Iran women is to donate money to Iran women rights organization – The Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI).

We would create a bank account and then transfer money to the organization after the event. Everyone can participate with the amount they find suitable and that is in line with their

possibilities. We would collect money from publishing the event until the end of the event. We would occasionally share the amount we have collected and would publish the final amount as well in our social media.

The Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) works to protect human rights in Iran by researching and documenting human rights violations across the country as well as disclosing them to the public to bring about change (CHRI, 2019).

The Center’s Impact (CHRI, 2019):

- Led the advocacy campaign for the creation of the mandate for the UN special rapporteur on human rights in Iran.
- Helped change Iran’s draconian death penalty laws to save thousands of lives each year.
- Obtained stays in the execution of juvenile and other offenders.
- Uncovered state violence against protesters and detainees.
- Advanced critical legislation regarding women’s and children’s rights.
- Strengthened internet access and security for hundreds of thousands of Iranian citizens.
- Obtained releases, medical care and family leave for political prisoners.
- Raised societal awareness in Iran of the discrimination religious and ethnic minorities face.
- Initiated groundbreaking advocacy for people with disabilities.

## 1.6. Reporting

There would be several reports provided to main stakeholders after the event:

- Overview of the event to the Student Union and University – provided in a document format.
- Overview of the event to all the participants and lecturers – provided in a presentation format.
- Overview of the event to the organizing team – provided in a presentation format.
- Overview of the event to the senior stakeholders and sponsors – provided in a document format.

In the report, the following areas of project implementation would be discussed:

- Description of the entire process of the project execution along with an analysis of the objectives and goals met.
- Performance of the budget and timeline.
- Factors, challenges and issues that affected the execution of the project as well as the project results.
- Description of the impact the project will have along with necessary takeaways and learning points.

### **1.7. Impact**

This section will explore the different outcomes and impact having the event at Tallinn University will have on the host organization Tallinn University, to the participants, to academia and to the stakeholders involved.

#### **Expected outcome of this project includes:**

- At least 3 articles written about it on different news sites.
- At least 30 social media posts which have tagged Tallinn University.
- 10% more clicks on the Tallinn University web page after the event.
- The Google search terms “Iran protest”, “#mahsaamini” and “#sayhername” will increase in searched amount in the Estonian area by 35%. This result could be verified by using website traffic tools provided by Google.
- 150 participants.

#### **The expected impact for Tallinn University after this event includes:**

- Tallinn University will be seen as a safe and respectful school towards social issues and oppressed people.
- Iranian women will feel like the university knows and cares about their struggles and that might incentivize them to pick Tallinn University when choosing to study abroad.
- Students taking part in this demonstration will feel more united and the school atmosphere will partially become warmer.

- Media coverage from various outlets leading to better awareness about Tallinn University and its student life.
- This event can create new study material for different specialties i.e., marketing students can analyze the marketing actions taken by the organizers and pick out its strengths and weaknesses.

**The expected impact for the participants after this event includes:**

- Feeling as if they are making their voice heard and are truly supporting Iranian women.
- The sense of connection with other participants.
- Opportunity to make friends with likeminded people.
- Participants after the event find more interest towards social issues and become more comfortable standing up for what they believe in.

**The expected impact on academia would be:**

- Include the gender factor in academic work and research.
- Acquire awareness of gender bias in Iran and other countries with such policies.
- Present a vast body of information about women's emancipation and freedom of choice.
- Researchers could get a deeper literary understanding of the issue of women's liberation, particularly in the setting of Iran.
- Bring about change by discussing Iran's current situation and putting forth ideas to encourage structural change with relation to the country's severe laws against women.
- Plan events that emphasize incorporating a gender perspective into research and innovation topics and/or that support institutional change to advance gender equality in the nation.

This academic conference on women rights and freedom would have certain positive impacts on stakeholders like Iranian students in TLU and Iranian people and state in large.

**To Iranian students in TLU:**

- The Iranian students at TLU would get a platform and motivation to speak about women rights.
- They would get more insight and draw comparison between their rich and beautiful history and present awful laws concerning women.

- This will also draw the student’s attention towards the soft topics like freedom of choice and perspective of women in this regard.
- The students would get to know about structural regime changes and how they can implement the basic human right policies for both genders, especially the women just like in Europe and western world.

### **To Iranian people and state in large:**

- This academic conference will act as a tribute to Mahsa Amini and other 41 protestors who present their lives in the fight to get their basic human rights.
- This academic conference would become a reference point for women in Iran to explain their position every time a woman is subjected to the ignominy of forced hijab or other strict restrictions.
- The Iranian people would get the courage to address the severity and significance of women rights issues at different platforms and forums with greater audience.
- They would get to know that they are not alone and their voices are being heard in this time of trial and the world is sympathetic towards their rights in Iran.

### **1.8. Budget**

Total estimated amount is 4755 €, however there are possibilities for it to go lower. The biggest cost is regarding catering which is approximately 2800 €. The budget consists also event souvenirs which cost approximately 505 €. There is a possibility that souvenirs estimated price could go lower if souvenirs producers would support the event with free souvenirs. Event budget consists also accommodation price if the speakers or volunteers need it. Event budget details are shown in table 4.

Table 4. Event Budget

<b>Category</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Costs, €</b>
<b>Labor costs</b>		
Crew members	Small symbolic rewards for convening the conference (60€/day each)	300

<b>Category</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Costs, €</b>
Guest speakers	Small symbolic rewards for contributions: 1 keynote speaker (100€/day each) and 6 guest speakers including the invited Iranian students (58€/day each)	448
Volunteers	Small symbolic rewards for contributions (50€ each – includes food etc.), approximately 5 will be recruited	200
<b>Professional services - done by volunteers and our team</b>		
Accounting	Managing the whole event and fundraising	0
Marketing and public relations	Event promotion, advertisement casting, communication management (also social media), e.g., liaison with newspaper, magazines and participants	0
Technical support	Connection, device maintenance	0
<b>Equipment and Material Supply</b>		
Conference materials	Posters, leaflets prepared by the team with only a small amount printed to be put on the bulletin board to practice green action	30
Conference Souvenirs	Customized pen, reflectors, keychains. Help to further extend and sustain the impact of the event	505 (this amount can go smaller if we gain sponsorship from the souvenirs producers)
<b>Others</b>		
Conference rooms renting	at TLU	0

Category	Notes	Costs, €
Catering rooms renting	At TLU	0
Travel costs	Reimbursement to guest speakers	100
Accommodation	Booked in advance for the guest speakers and volunteers in need	200 (this might not be needed)
Catering	<p>Two meals, snacks and drinks for the crew members, keynote speakers, guest speakers, volunteers.</p> <p>175 people might turn up including speakers and staff/volunteers.</p> <p>2€ for coffee x 3 (brake and lunch) is 6€ per invent per person (175x6=1050€).</p> <p>1 lunch is about 10€ (cheapest) per person (altogether 175x6 = 1050\$)</p>	2800
		<b>Total Costs 4755€</b>

## **SUMMARY**

We believe that this conference will raise awareness regarding Iranian women rights in Tallinn University and we hope to support them with the fundraiser as well. We hope that Iranian women can feel the support and would keep up the fight for their rights. They are fighting for the right thing and if all the countries show some support, then it would make Iranian women stronger than ever. It is important to show the world what truly matters and fight for the right cause.

We hope that Tallinn University Student Union can contribute to organizing this event and help us to spread the word regarding women rights in Iran.



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