

ARTISTIC
FREEDOM
INITIATIVE

RESETTLEMENT SERVICES

**NYC Artist
Safe
Haven
Residency
Program**

ABOUT NYCASHRP

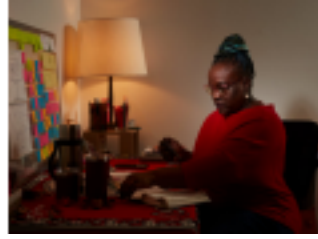
The NYC Artist Safe Haven Residency Program (NYCASHRP) is a yearlong residency for NYC-based international artists who have faced censorship, persecution, or other threats to their freedom of expression.

This coalition-led program offers residents holistic services, including:

Pro bono immigration assistance (Artistic Freedom Initiative),

Customized professional development and community engagement (Joe's Pub at the Public Theater, Residency Unlimited, Tamizdat, and The New School),





HOW IT STARTED

An innovative urban artist safety hosting Program

Founded in 2017 by Artistic Freedom Initiative, Todd Lanier Lester (ArtistSafety.net / FreeDimensional), Residency Unlimited, and Westbeth Artists Housing, the New York City Artist Safe Haven Residency Program (NYCASHRP) is an innovative urban artist safety hosting program. Arts and advocacy organizations come together to form the

NYCASHRP coalition, providing holistic support for international at-risk artists who have faced censorship, persecution, or other threats to their freedom of expression.

Through this coalition, the residency offers artists legal aid, resettlement assistance, professional development, financial assistance for living expenses and artist materials, advocacy, community engagement, and other services. In 2024 and 2025, the program hosted visual artists and musicians through a and musicians through a coalition that includes Artistic Freedom Initiative, Residency Unlimited, Tamizdat, and Joe's Pub at the Public Theater.

From 2017 through 2023, the program hosted visual artists, musicians, writers, and filmmakers.

To date, our residency program has hosted twenty one artists from Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Congo, Vietnam, Haiti, Uganda, India, Tunisia, Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Palestine, Russia, and Kyrgyzstan.

Comprehensive Living Assistance, Legal Support, and Professional Development

Legal Services For At-Risk Artists

In addition to managing the program as a whole, AFI provides artists in residence with legal services and support from our network of pro bono attorneys and extensive resettlement assistance that is tailored to the

needs of each individual. AFI's legal services include talent based and performance visas, asylum applications, and Employment Authorization Documents (EADs).

Living Assistance

In 2024 and 2025, the program provides financial assistance to artists in residence for their living expenses and artist materials. From 2017 through 2023, the program included free artist housing at the historic Westbeth Artists Housing community in New York City's West Village. Located in the heart of Manhattan's West Village, Westbeth Artists Housing is a non-profit housing complex that has provided affordable live-work space to New York City's artists since the late 1960s. Formerly the Bell Laboratories headquarters, Westbeth was redeveloped in 1968 by the J. M. Kaplan Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts into one of the world's largest artist communities. In addition to 383 housing units, the complex includes a large gallery, theater, visual art, music, and dance studios, community room, and childcare center.

Visual Artists

Residency Unlimited and other partners provide our visual and multidisciplinary artist residents with unique, customized professional residency programming, composed of network support, project and production assistance, exhibition and public programming opportunities.

READ MORE

Artist Safety Hosting Guide

The Artist Safety Hosting Guide was co-written by Artistic Freedom Initiative and Todd Lanier Lester (ArtistSafety.net/FreeDimensional). It was published in the fall of 2019 with support from our New York City Artist Safe Haven Residency Program coalition, the David Rockefeller Fund, and the Shelley & Donald Rubin Foundation. The guide offers reflections on the history, ethics, and best practices of artist safety hosting in New York City and elsewhere, tracks the development of our coalition-led residency program, and includes a section dedicated to legal assistance for at-risk artists.

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