

THE UNHCR NANSEN REFUGEE AWARD 2021

BIOGRAPHY

What is the Nansen Refugee Award?



The UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award honors individuals, groups and organizations who go above and beyond the call of duty to protect refugees, displaced and stateless people. The Award is presented every year and the winner receives USD 150,000 donated by the governments of Norway and Switzerland. Four regional winners are also recognized. Through its recipients, the Nansen Refugee Award aims to showcase Fridtjof Nansen's - the first High Commissioner for Refugees - values of perseverance and commitment in the face of adversity.

How is the winner honored?

Every year, the winner (laureate) is honored at a dignified ceremony in Geneva in front of an audience from across the globe. The Nansen Refugee Award monetary prize aims at enabling its annual recipient to pursue a project to assist displaced people, developed in close consultation with UNHCR.

[When is the winner announced?](#)

This year, the laureate along with four regional winners will be announced at the end of September, ahead of the ceremony usually held in the first week of October. The ceremony coincides with the first day of the UNHCR's Executive Committee Meeting (ExCom), and it's an annual event for stakeholders, policy makers and it features renowned and up-and-coming artists who support the refugee and displacement cause.

[Who are the previous winners?](#)

The first Nansen Refugee Award recipient was Eleanor Roosevelt, first Chair of the UN Human Rights Commission and First Lady of the United States alongside President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Over the years, more than 60 individuals, groups or organizations have received the award for their extraordinary service to refugees and outstanding work on behalf of the displaced. See more on [past winners](#).

[Who was Fridtjof Nansen?](#)

Fridtjof Nansen was a Norwegian explorer, scientist, diplomat, humanitarian, and Nobel Peace Prize laureate. He served as the first High Commissioner for Refugees for the League of Nations from 1920-1930, helping hundreds of thousands of refugees to return home. His efforts enabled many others to become legal residents and find work in the countries where they had found refuge. The legacy of his work is carried on through the Nansen Refugee Award.

[Who are the partners for the award?](#)

The partnership behind the award has provided a solid foundation for its continued success. The Swiss and Norwegian governments fund the monetary prize. The IKEA Foundation and UNHCR provide the funding for the annual project.

[Media opportunities](#)

Media packages on the laureate and regional winners will be made available ahead of the September announcement. Virtual arrangements to cover the laureate/regional winners' work, as well as one-to-one interviews, can be facilitated upon request. The Nansen Refugee Award team can be reached by email:

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