



The Simorgh

## Call for Film/Documentary Makers

### For the “Being the Other” Project

**In pursuit of The Simorgh in Europe:  
Collecting tales of belonging and integration amongst the Iranian diaspora**

Iran suffers an intense brain drain of highly skilled individuals. Many migrants come to Europe with expectations of freedom, access to education, and a better quality of life and work. Though filled with these high hopes, they also arrive oblivious to the hardships (and opportunities) they will incur along the way.

The objective of the study on “Being the Other” is to share true stories and narratives from Iranians in Western Europe -- and migrants in general -- about the opportunities and challenges of being a migrant with the aim of **1)** helping other potential and new migrants become more aware of these realities and to correct their expectations and **2)** helping policy-makers understand the community’s challenges and abilities to improve their view of and approach to integration.

#### The main research questions are:

- How do (Iranian) migrants experience the ‘otherness’ in their everyday social interactions?
- How do they perceive and construct the notion of home?
- What reinforces or undermines their sense of belonging?
- What are some of the opportunities and challenges a migrant faces?
- What has improved for the migrant?
- How long did it take to feel settled in their new home?
- How does one feel at home again? What are the signs and symbols?
- If a migrant could go back home, how would they feel?

As global migration continues, we believe these are important questions to ask and vital stories to be told and heard; told by people going through the different phases of adaptation and integration, and heard by the thousands of individuals who want to embark on this journey of migration—what can one expect, is it really better than my “home country”—and heard by governments and policy makers, who need to make sense of migration and its challenges.

### **Call for Film Makers**

#### **Are you interested in our project?**

We are looking for someone to help make our film (either as a teaser or documentary or both) and tell the story of the Iranian migrants. The film maker will also have the possibility to be part of the creative and research team of the study.

#### The Simorgh

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E-Mail: [info@thesimorgh.org](mailto:info@thesimorgh.org) • Website: [www.thesimorgh.org](http://www.thesimorgh.org)

The Simorgh is registered under the name Simorgh Kulturaustausch-Verein, ZVR Zahl: 110973108 • Obfrau: Dr. Pari Namazie

Erste Bank AG (Bank code: 20111) • Account holder: Simorgh Kulturaustauschverein

Account number: 82520630300 • IBAN: AT23 2011 1825 2063 0300 • BIC: GIBAATWWXXX



## Filmmaker requirements

- Film studies or experience in making short films or documentaries
- Editing skills to make a film or a series of short films
- Ability to advise on what criteria our interviewees should use to record their stories
- Possibility to work virtually
- Persian and English language skills

The Simorgh is a non-profit organization with limited funds; however, it is able to provide **Euro 4,000** for the entire filming project, including consulting, managing the project, filming, editing and final film delivery.

## About the film(s)

- **Content:** The film should consist of interviews and scenes interviewees choose to film that represent home or what they love (cities, rooms, parks, buildings, objects, etc.)
- **Quantity & length:** It could either be a series of short films or one long one. The filmmaker has the creative freedom to decide on this and provide input together with the advisory team.
- **Distribution:** Snippets of the film will be posted online (YouTube or Vimeo). Otherwise, we will let the filmmaker advise on where to best distribute it. Film festivals will be considered.
- **Participants:** Ideally, we will have 30 participants to suit the narrative of the Simorgh mythology. However, this is not a fixed number and will depend on participants and the quality of the film/stories.
- **Participants filmmaker bridge:** The filmmaker will not travel to the participants, but instead advise them in how to best film their pieces and how to send them (e.g. Vimeo).

If you are interested in making our film for the “Being the Other project”, please send an email to [info@thesimorgh.org](mailto:info@thesimorgh.org) and include:

- Your resume,
- A covering letter on how you can contribute to this project with general ideas you would like to share and
- Samples of your work.

Deadline for submission is **20 October 2017**. Please note, proposals are discussed in a selection committee, the final decision of the chosen filmmaker will be announced by end October. The film project is planned to commence in November and be completed before the end of 2017.

Warm wishes,  
The Simorgh Team

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## **More About the Project (for participants)**

### **Who can take part as a film subject?**

Our interviewees in this research project come with the following requirements:

- Born in Iran
- Now living in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland or the UK
- Interested to share your stories and experiences of migration with others; anonymity is no problem

### **How it works**

After applying for the project and filling out a simple registration form to see whether you fit the above-mentioned criteria, selected candidates are invited to participate in:

1. A face to face or online focus group discussion (approx. 2 hours)
- 2.a. An online video prep session (e.g. via skype) with one of our research team members to guide you in how to best tell your story (optional)
- 2.b. A creative video: Tell us your story about being the other. You can record yourself either alone or with a friend or family member asking you questions and record short moments of your home/country or anything that represents being the other to you. Be creative, the sky is the limit!

### **What happens next**

Data from the focus groups is analysed identifying key themes. This information will be composed and in a book titled "Being a Migrant", which will be the second book in the *Being* series and following our first book [Being Iranian](#). The videos will be prepared as a short film, telling the story of Iranian migrants.

### **How to register**

Participants should send us a simple email saying who they are and that they would like to take part at [iranian.diaspora.study.fsw@vu.nl](mailto:iranian.diaspora.study.fsw@vu.nl). We will get in touch and together find the best way to tell their story.

We are very excited about this new project. It is a narrative that needs to be told and needs to be heard. Please help us spread the word; you can find the Persian invitation [online](#). If you have any general questions, please email us at [info@thesimorgh.org](mailto:info@thesimorgh.org).

*From the Research Group "[The Role and Identity of the Iranian Diaspora](#)": The Department of Social Sciences of the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam & The Simorgh Research Team.*