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# JobOppO's AfghanOppO Programme

JobOppO's AfghanOppO Programme was established in September 2021 as a direct result of the powerful stories we all saw coming from Afghanistan the month before.



concept. The plight of former military interpreters and other "Locally Employed Staff", many of whom served closely with our own service personnel, was enough to encourage the JobOppO team to quickly pull this programme together to support their AfghanOppO programme.

Working in partnership with the Sulha Alliance, a charitable organisation who have been supporting former interpreters for the last 6 year, their programme is simple and follows the following process;

**Step 1:** The Sulha Alliance verify and refer eligible former Afghan nationals to JobOppO.

**Step 2:** AfghanOppOs complete a simple on-boarding process where broad experience and aspirations are ascertained.

**Step 3:** Access granted to JobOppO's exclusive jobs board and employability support tools.

The initiative was driven by Garrath Williams, JobOppO's Director of Veteran Engagement, himself a veteran of the Afghanistan conflict who quickly engaged a variety of JobOppO's committed employment partners who were glad to support the



**Step 4:** Introductions made to employment partners who have expressed a willingness to support the AfghanOppO programme.

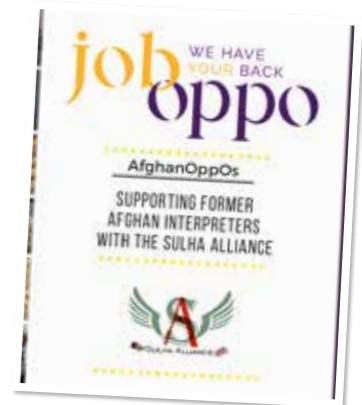
**Step 5:** Our employment partners liaise directly with the AfghanOppOs to discuss training/employment opportunities to support their settling in.

As well as the access and support described above, JobOppO works with former Royal Engineer Stu Miller the Training And Development Officer at SDM Training Services, to deliver virtual employability workshops focusing on CVs, interview preparations and job searching skills, and where possible provides mentoring or local support to their AfghanOppOs.

The challenges faced by former interpreters and their families can be complex. Some have been here for up to 4 years, some for 3 or 4 months and are receiving mixed support from the Home Office or their Local Authorities. While we strive to manage expectation, each individual needs a bespoke conversation and patient support. No two circumstances appear to be the same and the JobOppO team are happy to help provide context or additional support is needed.

The AfghanOppO cohort is diverse, as is the Afghan culture. Many are highly educated who may have worked as an interpreter with our military before moving into more senior private or public sector roles, many within various Afghan Government departments. While some understand they may need to rebuild their careers as well as their lives, others are more keen to try and find a role that aligns more readily to their former employment.

As well as working with various government departments and third sector organisations JobOppO have introduced many AfghanOppOs to several SMEs and large national employers such as Premier Inn and Asda. These two organisations



have appointed project managers to support the on-boarding of former Afghan interpreters keen to learn more about opportunities they have available. To date several AfghanOppOs have commenced working or training at JobOppO partner employers and all have shared immense pride in the work that is being done to help these people settle in to their new lives.

RAF veteran, former military linguist and founder of the OppO Group Kayam Iqbal has engaged several AfghanOppOs personally introducing them to local cultural advisors and working with employers to improve their understanding of the additional challenges these very proud people may face as they integrate into British society.



Garrath Williams with a former Afghan interpreter at Westminster Abbey.

for more info about JobOppO – visit [JobOppO.co.uk](http://JobOppO.co.uk)