



ANNUAL REPORT





Table of Contents

01	Message from the Director	p 03
02	2021 in Review	p 04
03	Financial Highlights	p 13
04	Press & Recognition	p 15
05	ArtsFund COVID Cultural Impact Study	p 16
06	Thank you to our Supporters	p 18

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear Friend,

People frequently ask me what “Tasveer” means.

When I explain that it translates to “picture” in both Hindi and Urdu, they nod in understanding. Known as we are for our annual South Asian film festival (largest in the country!) and our focus on using the arts to advance social justice, that name makes a lot of sense.

Lately, as I’ve been reflecting on two decades I have served this incredible organization, it occurs to me that while “picture” is apt, Tasveer means so much more--to me, and to you, the community with and for whom we work.

In 2021 your support allowed us to experiment with the Tasveer Festival, a month-long extravaganza of film and literary offerings, during which filmmakers, authors, scholars, and activists shared their art and created conversations--with you--that tried to understand the current moment while also placing it into a larger historical context. From our vaccine information program with the state of Washington to a newly expanded Tasveer Film Fund and the Desi Girl Comedy Project, we used our platform to elevate our voices, while keeping our community healthy and connected.

So, what does Tasveer mean? For me, it means all the things I love--film and art used in the service of improving the world; and it means YOU--a community of caring, generous people who recognize the value of this work and choose to contribute your time and resources to keep it strong.

YOU mean the world to Tasveer!



Rita Meher

CO-FOUNDER/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



2021 IN REVIEW



PROGRAMS

Tasveer Festival

Tasveer Author Events

Tasveer Film Fund

Pride Month

Community Speaks

Dept of Health Partnership

combining our passions...

TASVEER FESTIVAL

WATCH | READ | TALK



Tasveer Festival - **Watch | Read | Talk** combined three major events: 16th Tasveer South Asian Film Festival (TSAFF), 3rd Tasveer South Asian LitFest (TSAL), and an all-women new standup talk- Desi Girls Comedy Project.

The festival took place over **24** days with **88** films, **37** authors, **47** live events, **28** filmmaker guests, and **6** comedians. Nearly **10,000** viewers tuned in from **125** cities, **53** states/ provinces, and **18** countries. Viewers watched **41,500** minutes of film on our virtual platform TasveerTV.

"I was immediately drawn to Tasveer's mission of amplifying underrepresented South Asian voices in literature and film. As an author who has struggled to find representation in a whitewashed industry where even voices of color are interpreted through a white lens- I believe Tasveer's work is meaningful & important"

- Veena Rao, award winning journalist & author.

WATCH

16th Annual

TASVEER SOUTH ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL



In its 16th year, Tasveer South Asian Film Festival wowed viewers with **88** films from **11** countries, with nine world premieres and **22** U.S. premieres. Selected films ranged from short films to features, and included documentaries, music videos, and even an interactive filmscape.

TSAFF Special Guests included

- Karan Soni (Deadpool), Roshan Sethi (The Resident), Sahraa Karimi (dir. Hava Maryam Ayesha, Afghanistan's official entry to the 92nd Academy Awards), Shiwani Srivastava (Wedding Season, in production with Netflix)

Filling Gaps in the Film Industry

In 2021 Tasveer South Asian Film Festival far outpaced the popular film industry in highlighting underrepresented groups:

- **100%** of TSAFF films featured South Asian characters, compared to only 7% of popular films including any Asian speaking characters
- **52%** of TSAFF films had a woman of color as the lead character (only 17% of popular films featured a woman of color in the lead)
- **43%** of TSAFF directors were women, compared to 10% of popular films directed by women

WATCH

16th Annual

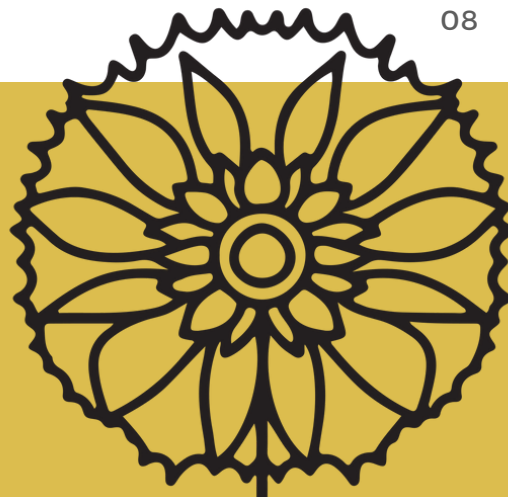
TASVEER SOUTH ASIAN FILM FESTIVAL



READ

3rd Annual

TASVEER SOUTH ASIAN LITFEST



The third iteration of Tasveer South Asian LitFest brought **37** authors to **10** live panel events focused around queer narratives, historical fiction, poetry, feminist and women-centered literature, the publishing industry, young adult fiction, and much more.

TSAL special guests included

- Mira Sethi (Are You Enjoying)
- Avni Doshi (Burnt Sugar)
- Alka Joshi (The Secret Keeper of Jaipur, film adaptation now in production with Netflix)

“Erasure of Stories is Violence.”

Hussain Haidry, author



TALK

*1st ever***DESI GIRLS
COMEDY
PROJECT**

Tasveer presented Desi Girls Comedy Project, the first-ever South Asian women's comedy of its kind, with funding from the Seattle Department of Neighborhoods. This four-week comedy workshop, led by New York-based comedian Zubi Ahmed, was offered free of charge to South Asian womxn and non-binary participants seeking to express themselves through comedy.

The majority of participants were from the Seattle area, with budding comedians also joining in virtually from Washington DC, Texas, New York, Canada, Pakistan, and Norway.

The project culminated in a side-splitting performance from local participants at our Tasveer Festival Closing Night, including guest appearances from:

- Zubi Ahmed, host of Kutti Gang (a New York Times and Time Out New York recommended comedy show that features women, queer, and non-binary South Asian performers)
- Aizzah Fatima, actor (Americanish, High Maintenance, The Good Wife) and writer/actor for one-woman play (Dirty Paki Lingerie)
- Sonal Aggarwal, comedian, and actor (The Alchemy of Bliss, Easy, A Period Piece)



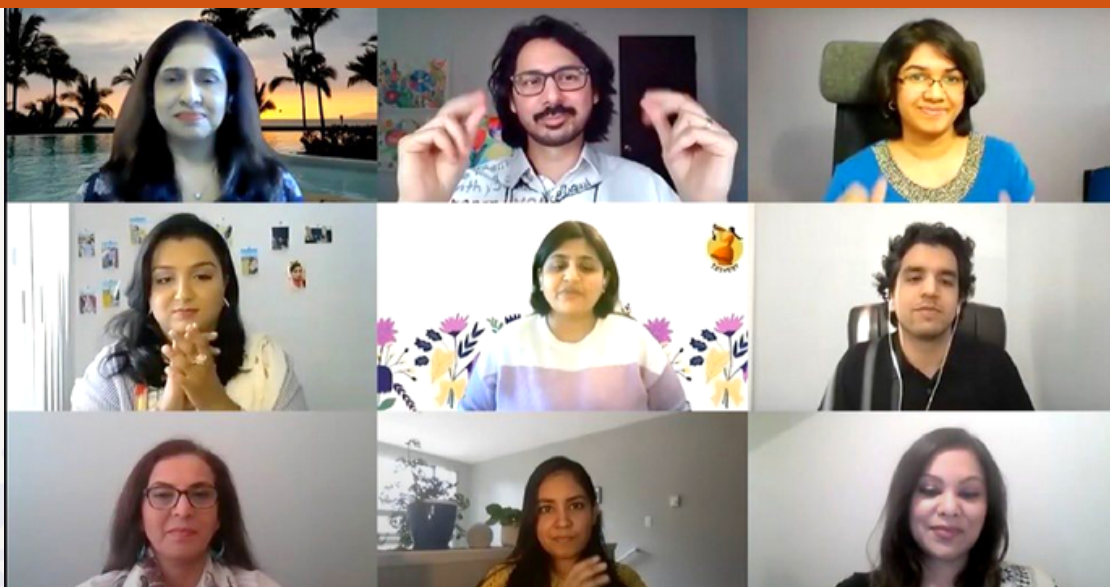


In 2021, with support from Netflix, Tasveer expanded the program to support three filmmakers who are developing short film, documentary and LGBTQIA+ film projects.

- **62** scripts were submitted, our highest engagement yet
- **9** finalists pitched their scripts to a panel of industry professionals
- **3** amazing scripts were funded
- **Documentary:** “Citizen Khan” by Khaula Malik & Sana A. Malik - A daughter finds herself caught between fear of betraying her father’s 100-year-old local business and her uncertain future as she prepares to sell the motel she’s been running.
- **LGBTQ+:** “Zindagi Dobara (Life Again)” by Amritpal Kaur - A film centering a young South Asian teen who, after her parents' sudden death, is forced to live with a distant grandmother she's never met before.
- **Short Narrative:** “Let’s Talk About It” by Mukesh Kumar - A young Indian-American woman has it all: a good job, a loving husband, and a nice house. But the unexpressed pressure and stigma of being in an inter-faith marriage and living in an alien society take a fatal toll on her life.

Speaking the taboo

COMMUNITY SPEAKS



- South Asian community members shared their stories of personal empowerment, spiritual reckoning, family acceptance, and more under the theme “Silencing the Taboo”. The 2021 iteration of Community Speaks, which began in 2008 as a co-presentation with API Chaya, sought to dismantle the power of the taboo that silences us.
- **8** brave storytellers participated in free workshops to write, hone, and present their personal stories of resilience
- **3** virtual presentations

“The driving factor of sharing my story was that the pain of keeping it inside was greater than the pain and fear of other people finding out. I also believe that there is power in words, and the feelings and emotions that once made me feel so powerless needed a way out. The entire process of writing and sharing my story was incredibly exhilarating because the group of South Asian people I was with were so accepting...”

- Adithya, Community Speaks participant

AUTHOR EVENTS

Throughout the year Tasveer partnered with Elliott Bay Book Company to host Q&A's and readings with excellent and compelling South Asian authors such as:

**REVEALING THE UNTOLD WITH BROWN GIRL MAGAZINE -
AUTHOR MEETS WITH SONORA JHA-**

PRIDE MONTH

Tasveer co-founder Farah Nousheen and filmmaker Sonali Gulati presented weekly arts and culture programs throughout June, to celebrate South Asian queer stories, build solidarity, and educate viewers including:

- **"I AM" FILM SCREENING + SONALI GULATI Q&A**
- **"I AM BONNIE" FILM SCREENING + DIRECTOR AND ACTOR Q&A**
- **SOUTH ASIAN SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE STUDY GROUP**
- **INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE WITH QUEER SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN**



PARTNERING WITH THE WA STATE DEPT OF HEALTH

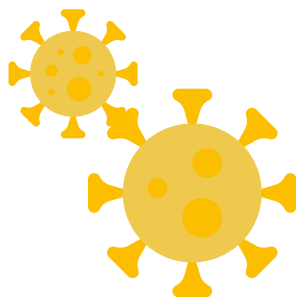
The WA State DOH partnered with Tasveer as we disseminated information about the COVID-19 vaccine in seven South Asian languages, encouraging viewers to take the vaccine, practice social distancing, and work together to end the pandemic. This partnership will continue in 2022, and we encourage folks to visit tasveer.org/covid-19 for information and resources.

For your safety, and the safety of those around you, please...

GET VACCINATED.

WEAR A MASK.

GET TESTED.



Financial Highlights

2021 INCOME

- Government Grants: \$179,000
 - Foundation Grants: \$47,500
 - Individual Giving: \$92,810
 - Corporate Matching: \$21,730
 - Sponsorship: \$77,000
 - Membership: \$1,475
 - Ticket & Pass Sales: \$8,300
 - Other Earned Income: \$35,390
- Total Income: \$463,205**



2021 EXPENSE

- Artistic Salaries: \$100,497
 - Production/ Exhibition/Service Expense: \$109,548
 - Administrative Expense: \$141,599
- Total Expense: \$351,644**



IN THE PRESS



TASVEER FILM FUND

[AP News: Tasveer Film Fund Triples Filmmaker Funding in the Second Year](#)

[Yahoo Finance: Tasveer Film Fund Triples Filmmaker Funding](#)

[Benzinga: Tasveer Film Fund Triples in Second Year](#)

TASVEER FESTIVAL

[FilmFestival.com: Tasveer Festival In-Person and Virtual Events going hybrid this fall](#)

[Crosscut: Fall Arts | 35 art shows and festivals to see in Seattle](#)

[Seattle Patch: Tasveer Festival Showcases the best in South Asian arts](#)

[What's Up NW: Upcoming Event: 16th Annual Tasveer Festival](#)

[Seattle Times: Love movies? Check out these Seattle-area film festivals in fall 2021](#)

[Seattle PI: Seattle's South Asian arts festival celebrates community through food](#)

[Goltune: Watch | Read | Talk : Theme of This Year's Tasveer Festival](#)

COVID CULTURAL IMPACT STUDY

Tasveer is proud to be one of five arts and culture nonprofits highlighted during ArtsFund's COVID Cultural Impact Study. This study revealed just how important arts and culture institutions have been throughout the pandemic in Washington State, as well as the devastating financial impacts that are felt most strongly by small and BIPOC-led nonprofits.

“Upon the arrival of COVID in Washington State in March 2020, arts and cultural venues were among the first to close, and in many cases, remain among the last to re-open. Despite this, the industry has been actively supporting our communities by offering healthy outlets to process the trauma, isolation, and loss that so many of us experienced throughout the crisis. While the cultural sector has shown resilience, innovation, and dedication in finding new ways to serve communities across the state, and while the investment of public, private, and individual supporters has kept the sector from collapse during closure, the future is still uncertain. We are in a moment of crisis. At the same time, we are in a moment of opportunity. The cultural sector will play a critical role in community recovery (economic and social), and there is a role for all of us to play in supporting the sector.”

- Michael Greer, ArtsFund President & CEO

“

We did - whether we wanted to or not - become a national organization.

”

Rita Meher, Executive Director of Tasveer, a quote from the study.

[Read the full report here](#)

COVID CULTURAL IMPACT STUDY

"The shift forced by the pandemic allowed Tasveer to prove that there is a deep market for the content that they produce, but now they haven't the resources and capacity to tap into the opportunity in front of them. They are working on a path forward. It was clear that offering programming for free was not sustainable for the organization, and more importantly, free content devalues art and the contributions of the filmmakers.

The most recent festival in October 2021 used a paywall and geo-blocking to protect artists and still reached 10,000 viewers. Netflix has supported a new fund housed at Tasveer to empower South Asian filmmakers with \$5,000 grants and year-long resources and mentorship access. Despite the success on the national scale and intention to continue with virtual offerings, Tasveer's roots are local, and they also long for the old days of connecting with their loyal film buffs in Northwest theaters. The digital pivot has been a struggle for older audience members who have been Tasveer cultural participants for 15+ years. Spaces that were willing to host the festival were scarce this past fall as the pandemic dragged on, and available spaces were in high demand. For a festival dependent on renting venues, space has been a constant challenge over its entire existence, and one that has only grown greater with COVID restrictions.

Tasveer's experience has shown just how meaningless our geographical boundaries can be when it comes to storytelling. Messages transcend borders with ease. In this context, the structure of our traditional means of funding arts and culture, can evolve with the changing ways arts and culture are being delivered. For example, Tasveer is delighting and enriching audiences in California, but not eligible for arts funding from California jurisdictions. Within Washington, the pattern of cities and counties with and without dedicated arts funding have created an uneven landscape of arts and cultural organizations. For Tasveer, an equitable and resilient future for arts and culture in Washington means recognizing that arts anywhere provides benefits everywhere".

Thank you to our supporters

Champions Circle

Shahina and Ali Piyarali

ArtsFund

ArtsWA

Amazon

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

City of Bellevue

City of Seattle

Group Health Foundation

Humanities Washington

Netflix

Seattle Neighborhoods

The Boeing Company

WA State Department of Health

Benefactors Society

Uzma Khan & Piruz Huda

Ashish Shah & Deepti Mandalia

Rajesh Soy

Anita & Deven Waghani

BECU

City of Issaquah

City of Renton

Dubois Cary Law Group

Himalaya Homes

Nadella Family Foundation

Tulalip Tribes Charitable Fund

UW South Asia Center



Thank you to our supporters

Patrons Club

Uma Raghavan
Ranjini & Rajeev Rajan
Rekha & Narendra Sood

ACLU of Washington
Sheth Family Foundation

Friends

Faria Alam
Saira Bano & Mubin Ansari
Pallavi Goray & Vithal Shirodkar
Douglas Lowell Ing
Shuba & Ramu Iyer
Poornima Janakiraman
Abhishek Kulkarni
Tayyab Mahmud
Tameem Mohammed
Muthu Muthiah

Ananya Rabeya &
Mohammad Safder Meah
Sumathi Raghavan & Mena Bova
SL Rao
Meera Sethi
Archana & Suren Verma
Geeta Vyas & Hemant Vyas

API Chaya
King County Library System
Utsav

Supporters

Ariv Adiaman	Susan Noyes
Amish Dave	Vijya Patel
Manka Dhingra	Rajeev Prasad
Sudeshna Dixit	Neetha Rao
Alicia Goodwin	Priyanka Rawal
Afshan & Fazal Khan	Meyyammai Subramanian
Ann Marie Foss	Tarul Tripathi
Sowmya Nanjaiah	Mandira Virmani

Advocates

Kathleen Arthur & Dmitry Gourkine	Molly & Forrest McIntosh
Samia Ashraf	Bipasha Mukherjee & Sriram
Subrahmanya Bhat	Rajagopalan
Priti Bhat	Indu and Jayan Nair
Monica Cary	Roshan & Sunita Shrestha
Steven Cole-Schwartz	Nigar Suleman
Jayant Gupchup & Supriya Kulkarni	
Uday Hegde	



Thank you to our supporters

Well Wishers

Seema Abbasi	Meg Bell	Shannon Cumming	Carol Gomez	Patricia Jaucian
Deeba Abidi	Anonymous	Juliette Dahl	Desirée Good	Niharika Jayanthi
Shyamashree Acharya	Bhavvani Reddy Family Fund	Nirmala Dash	Marcus Gorman	Dianne Jenett
Sohail Agha	Christina Billingsley	Rachel DeCarlo	Deepika Gosain	Selin Jessa
Aishu Amarnath	Patricia Boiko	Lucinda Dhavan	Srirupa Guha	Wendy Jo Cole
Dhara Amin	Jaswinder Brara	Purnima Dhavan	Monika Gupta	Bryndis Jonsson
Amna Amna	Calli Brooks	Kiran Dhillon	Tad Haas	Sarita & Aniket Joshi
Srilatha Ananth	Joanna Brown	Kuljinder Dhillon	Zohranie Habib & Fatima Naqvi	Kristyn Joy
Kathy Ann Strand	Ariel Brownstein	Bonnie Dixit	Sarah Hamid	Samir Junejo
Angela Apperson	Uzma & Mobeen Butte	Amanda DuBois	Jazmin Harvey	Naren Kadali
Rubina Arif	V. Calvez	Anonymous	Khan Hasan	Nikhila Kalra
Nitika & Taranjeet Arora	Sumit Chakravarty	Polly Fabian	Anu Hastings	Nikki Kanjani
Adam L Asare	Ina Chang	Aftab Farooqi	Joydeep Hazra	Roshni Karthikeyan
Molly Ashe	S Charusheela & Colin Danby	Kathy Fredrich	Neena Hemmady	Kiran Katira
Swarnima Aswinkumar	Saba Chatoor	Shaila Gadre	Anonymous	Amelia Kawad
Divya Avadutha	Nehan Chatoor	Shaheen G&hi	Leonard & Cathy Hill	Alan Kelly
Kalpa Baghasingh	Julia Chatterjee	Ramesh Gangolli	Reese Hogan	Aliya Khan
Harriet Bakken	Sabeen Chaudhry	Anjulie Ganti	Carrie Holmes	Hamid Khan
Suzan Ballsun	Tapoja Chaudhuri	Sha'ari Garfinkel	Ivana Huang	Anis Khan
Masoon Balouch	Jhumur Chaudhuri	Richard George	Brezaja Hutcheson	Terrence King
Mamtha Banerjee	Bhavana Chawla	Nishant Ghan	Iftikhar Iftikhar	Anna Kiran
Kirtana Banskota	Tazeen Chowdhury	Madhushree Ghosh	Seher Iqbal	Minal Kode Ghassemieh
Mohima Barua	Dipti Chrastka	Donna Goff	Suchitra & Satish Iyer	Sujith Krishna
	Chris Commons	Harini Gokul	Jennifer Jackman	
	Lisa Cowen			
Divya Krishnan	Suja Mathew	Eileen O'Shaughnessy	Nirasha Ramchurren & Shiva	
Vanessa Kritzer & Trevor Willett	Lambert Mathias	Erika O'Brien Mason	Sivakumar	
Shilpa Kulkarni	Harmesh Maurya	Margaret Ohashi	Aruna Rao	
Niraj Kumar	Abida Mazin	Ferdouse Oneza	Sirish Rao	
Alka Kurian & Shesh Mathur	Rita Meher & Brandon McIntosh	Teddy Orfanos	Cindy Rasicot	
Rosalyn Leban	S&ra Mehta	Aarti Pani	Jonathan Ratner	
Lucia Levias	Namrita Menon	Julian Parikh	Caitlin Reed	
Charlie Lindahl	David Mesenbring	Nirva Parikh	Vanessa Reyes	
Aiswarya M S	Donald Miller	Savi Pathi	Leonard Rifas	
Sarah Mace	Ali Mir	Linda Patterson	Sarah Rizvi	
Maya Magarati & Nil Tilija	Rohinton Mistry	Umair Piracha	Meher Rizvi	
Sribala Magesh	Anjali Mitter Duva	Manizeh Pirzada	Lino Rodrigues	
Meeran Mahmud	Anonymous	Arlene Plevin	Luis Rodrigues	
Sheena Malhotra	Nicole Morgan	Brooke Plumlee	Richa Rudola	
Kiran Malhotra	Margaret Murphy	Leon Powell	Sabeeka Sabeeka	
Sheraz & Faiza Malik	Akira Murphy	Rabab Rabab	Kate Sackett	
Seher Malik	Abinav Murugadass	Priya Raghav	Maral Sahebame	
Alka Manchanda	Muthu Muthiah	Raj Raghavan	Ravi & Madhu Sanga	
Kabir Mansingh Heimsath	Lata Nadig	Elizabeth Raible	Victoria Santos	
Diane Mapes	Mala Nagarajan	Divya Rajan	Paroma Sanyal	
Kristin Marks	Jumana & Murtuza Naguthanawala	Clement Rajendra	Rishi Sanyal	
Najia Masood	Sirisha Naidu	Uma Ram	Susie Schaefer	
Zeinab Masud	Chuck Nordhoff	Lakshmi Raman	Susan Schuurman	
	Farah Nousheen	Megha Ramaswamy	Jake Scruggs	

Thank you to our supporters

Well Wishers

Well Wishers cont.

Sejal Shah
Moncia Shah
Darshana Shanbhag
Bhavna Shankar
Geeta Sharma
Arun Sharma
Ruby Shrestha
Gauri Shringarpure
Carrie Shiahpush
Robert Sidiesq
Richard Simonson
Manoj & Geeta Singh

Piyusha Singh
Navin Sivakumar
Nick Smith
Claudette Snow-Schell
Sandhya Sridhar
Padmini Sridharan
Anjali Srivastava
Diana Steeble
Vega Subramaniam
Kelly Sutter
Sairam Tabibu
Shuchi Talati
Anu Taranath

Sana Tariq
Turfa Tasnim
Rekah Tobaccowala
Brian Trinh
David Tucker
Badan & Raksha Tuladhar
Supriya Unnikrishnan
Nik V.
Gauri Vaidya
Deanna V&iver
Sathyaprakash Varadarajan
Neal Vasishth
Devi Vijay
Parveen Virani

Prachi Vora & Akshat Divatia
Jean Walton
Kendrick Washington
Audrey Watanabe
David Wilson
Mary Wright
Eliyas Yakub
Ariana Ylvisaker
Saleha Younus
Asad Zaidi
Tehmina Zaidi & Jafar Shameem
Amber Zeddies

Tasveer Members

Seema Abbasi
Olympia Bhatt
Christina Billingsley
Patricia Boiko
Ariel Brownstein
Sumit Chakravarty
Tazeen Chowdhury
Amish Dave
Kiran Dhillon
Bonnie Dixit
Shaila Gadre
Anju Ganti
Shuba Iyer
Sarita Joshi
Samir Junejo
Rajesh Korde
Raj Krishna
Molly McIntosh
Namrita Menon

Michael Merli
David Mesenbring
Manasi Mishra
Chuck Nordhoff
Susan Noyes
Arlene Plevin
Ishika Rajan
Jonathan Ratner
Ambalika S
Ishita Saran
Susie Schaefer
Navin Sivakumar
Jessica Smith
Kathy Strand
Anu Taranath
Brian Trinh
Neal Vasishth
David Wilson
Ariana Ylvisaker
Amy Benson

Staff

Rita Meher, Executive Director
Uzma Khan, IT Director
Ariel Brownstein, Development Manager
Namrita Menon, Technical Program Manager
Manasi Mishra, Marketing Manager
Ishita Saran, Program Manager
Jitendra Joshi, Web Developer
Patricia Jaucian, Social Media Coordinator
Chintan Buddhadev, Sponsorship Coordinator

Board

FARAH NOUSHEEN, Co-Founder
ALKA KURIAN, Board President
SUMATHI RAGHAVAN, Secretary

ARIV ADIAMAN
SAIRA BANO
SAMIR JENEJO
TAYYAB MAHMUD
SHAHINA PIYARALI
SUNIL SHINDE
ANITA WAGHANI



GET INVOLVED WITH TASVEER!

Tasveer's accomplishments are only possible through the ongoing support of our community. There is so much you can do to be part of the magic!

[Donate](#)

[Sponsor](#)

[Volunteer](#)

[Sign Up for E-News](#)

Visit <https://tasveer.org/>