DR. NAZANIN ZADEH-CUMMINGS

Groningen • The Netherlands
n.a.zadeh-cummings@rug.nl
nazaninzc.owlstown.net

Qualifications

University Teaching Qualification/Basiskwalificatie Onderwijs, University of Groningen, May 2024

Graduate Certificate, Higher Education Learning and Teaching, Deakin University, March 2019 – February 2020

PhD, Asian and International Studies, City University of Hong Kong, September 2014 – February 2019
Dissertation title - Humanitarians in the Hermit Kingdom: Aid, Access, and NGOs in the DPRK

MA, International Humanitarian Action, Ruhr-Universität Bochum/Université catholique de Louvain, September 2012 - December 2013
Thesis title - Death in Disaster: Actions and Attitudes towards Dead Body Management after Disasters in Yogyakarta

MA (Honours), International Relations, University of Edinburgh, September 2007 - July 2011

Certificat d'Etudes Politiques (Certificate of Political Studies), Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Grenoble, September 2009 – June 2010

Employment

Assistant Professor in International Relations and Humanitarian Action, November 2023 – present: University of Groningen, Groningen, the Netherlands

- Teaching undergraduate and postgraduate courses, including Monitoring and Evaluation, Humanitarian Response, Management in Humanitarian Action, and Advanced Management in Humanitarian Action; supervising undergraduate and Master's theses
- Active member of the Global International Relations research group, Artificial Intelligence Working Group, and Network on Humanitarian Action

Senior Lecturer, January 2023 – September 2023; **Lecturer,** August 2018 – December 2022: School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia
Associate Director of Research, December 2019 – September 2023: Centre for Humanitarian Leadership (CHL) at Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia

- Teaching postgraduate courses in humanitarian studies, including Humanitarian Development Nexus, Introduction to the Humanitarian World, Disaster Risk Reduction and Management, Evidence and Decision-Making in Humanitarian Action, Needs Assessment: From Theory to Practice, and Dynamics and Dilemmas in the Humanitarian Sector
- Undergraduate teaching and coordination of special project work-integrated learning experience for students during COVID-19 lockdowns, Humanitarian Action Team Internship
- PhD supervision, including supervising to completion as primary supervisor, co-supervisor, and associate supervisor
- Leadership role as Associate Director of Research, including tracking relevant commitments, managing $400,000 research budget, coordinating 25 member research network, and ensuring delivery of key performance indicators for major donors
- Editor-in-chief for The Humanitarian Leader, a monthly working paper series with over 20,000 views and downloads in 2023
- Active member of POLIS (Politics and International Studies) and Asian Media, Culture and Society Research Groups

Teaching Assistant, September 2014 – August 2017; City University of Hong Kong
- Supporting undergraduate courses, including Political Dynamics in Asia, State and Development of Northeast Asia, Contemporary International Politics of the Asia-Pacific, US Politics and Society, and Traditions of Inquiry in the Social Sciences
- Designed and delivered seminars; marked essays and presentations

Other positions

Special Issue Co-Editor, March 2025 – present: Journal of International Humanitarian Action special issue 'Humanitarian Aid Workers: Ethics, Altruism, and Best Practices'

Non-Resident Fellow, March 2025 – present: European Centre for North Korean Studies, University of Vienna

Next-Gen Policy Expert (non-resident fellowship), 2024 cohort: Asia Institute at University of Bologna, Korea-EU-NATO Next Generation Policy Experts Network

Honorary Fellow, January 2024 – present: School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia

Member, January 2024 – present: National Committee on North Korea, Washington D.C., United States

Founding Co-chair, May 2023 – present: International Humanitarian Studies Association (IHSA) Humanitarian Education and Pedagogy Working Group

Emerging Leader (non-resident fellowship), 2022 cohort: National Committee on American Foreign Policy, Next Generation Korean Peninsula Specialists

Elected Board Member, November 2022 – present: IHSA

Editor-in-Chief, January 2020 – September 2023: *The Humanitarian Leader* working paper series, Centre for Humanitarian Leadership

Publications

Zadeh-Cummings, N., Bakama Bope, E., and Grace, R. (2025). 'Humanitarian Access,' in *An Introduction to Humanitarian Action*, K. Radtke and K. Roepstorff (eds.). Routledge, 265-280. https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781003350279-15/humanitarian-access-nazanin-zadeh-cummings-eug%C3%A8ne-bakama-bope-rob-grace

Son, S. A., **Zadeh-Cummings, N.**, and Chubb, D. (2025). 'Participatory Transitional Justice as Anticipatory Project: North Korea, Diasporas and Uncertain Futures,' *International Journal of Transitional Justice*. https://doi.org/10.1093/ijtj/ijaf006

Coghlan, R., **Zadeh-Cummings, N.,** Petrova, M., and Spiegel, P. (2024). 'The "new-old" dimensions of caring in humanitarian response: The opportunity for public health palliative care to advance humanitarian-development nexus, decoloniality, and localization thought.' *INQUIRY: The Journal of Health Care Organisation, Provision, and Financing, 61.* https://doi.org/10.1177/00469580241277443.

Saha, M., **Zadeh-Cummings, N.**, McGlasson, M. A., and Brockington, S. (2024). '"For them it's not the work, it's the life": humanitarian leadership development in the Global South,' *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, *9*(article n.10). https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-024-00152-x.

Zadeh-Cummings, N., Janz, K., Banfill, J., Barret, J., and Bennett, I. (2023). '(Re)Engagement with the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea: Dialogue and planning for future opportunity.' *Centre for Humanitarian Leadership* report. Available at: https://centreforhumanitarianleadership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/IFES-brief.pdf [Korean version available at: https://centreforhumanitarianleadership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/IFES-brief_KO.pdf].

Zadeh-Cummings, N., and Hallwright, J. (2023). 'Humanitarian Resistance: Advocacy Within and Against Current Systems.' *Turkish Red Crescent Journal of Humanitarian Action, 2*(2). https://doi.org/10.55280/trcjha.2023.2.2.0096.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2023). 'Humanitarian aid,' in *Elgar Encyclopedia of Development*, Matthew Clarke and Xinyu Zhao (eds.), Edward Elgar Publishing, 341-345. https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800372122.ch71.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2023). 'Shaping the Humanitarian Arena: South Korean, American, and Christian NGOs in North Korea,' in *Korea and the Global Society*, Yonson Ahn (ed.). Routledge, 17-36. https://doi.org/10.4324%2F9781003301127.

Stibral, A. A., **Zadeh-Cummings, N.**, and Clarke, M. (2022). Mastering humanitarianism? A survey of postgraduate humanitarian courses. *Higher Education* 84, 741-760. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-021-00797-2.

Chubb, D., and **Zadeh-Cummings, N.** (2022). 'International engagement with North Korea: Disability, human rights and humanitarian aid,' *Third World Quarterly*, *40*(1), 134-151. https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2022.2141217.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2022). 'Humanitarian (Re)engagement: Supporting North Korean Human Security in the Age of COVID-19,' in *The Future of the Korean Peninsula and Beyond: Next Generation Policy Perspectives*. National Committee on American Foreign Policy, 38-50. https://www.ncafp.org/2016/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/The-Future-of-the-Korean-Peninsula-and-Beyond.pdf

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2022). 'Through the looking glass: Coloniality and mirroring in localisation.' *Humanitarian Leader,* working paper 031. http://doi.org/10.21153/thl2022art1693

Zadeh-Cummings, N., Son, S., and Chubb, D. (2022). 'Preparing for transitional justice in North Korea.' *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, *76*(2), 121-129.

Banfill, J., Barrett, J., Vitantonio, C., and **Zadeh-Cummings, N.** (2021). 'Opening Doors in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.' *Humanitarian Leader*, working paper 15. https://doi.org/10.21153/thl2021volno0art1314.

Zadeh-Cummings, N., and Harris, L. (2020). 'Humanitarian Aid in North Korea: Needs, Sanctions and Future Challenges.' *Centre for Humanitarian Leadership,* report. Available at: https://centreforhumanitarianleadership.org/research/publications/humanitarian-aid-in-north-korea-needs-sanctions-and-future-challenges/.

Zadeh-Cummings, N., and Harris, L. (2020). 'Impacts of Sanctions against North Korea on Humanitarian Aid.' *Journal of Humanitarian Affairs*, 2(1), 44-52. https://doi.org/10.7227/JHA.033.

Bagherzadeh, N. (2014). 'Death in Disaster: Actions and Attitudes Towards Dead Body Management After Disasters in Yogyakarta.' (Working Paper Vol. 4, No. 2). Bochum: IFHV, Ruhr-Universität Bochum. Available at: https://doi.org/10.17176/20220622-132531-0.

Conference Papers and Guest Lectures

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2025, September). 'Ready for anything? How humanitarians prepare for crisis,' *Humanitarian Studies: Adapting and Reworking in New Times and Contexts,* Humanitarian Studies Centre/International Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Netherlands.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2025, May). 'Humanitarian issues in the DPRK: From 1948 to Present [guest lecture],' University of Malaga, Malaga, Spain.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2025, February). 'Understanding the impact of humanitarian engagement in North Korea,' *The Korean Peninsula and Other Divided Nations,* University of Central Lancashire Cyprus Campus, Pyla, Cyprus.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2024, May). 'Mirroring in humanitarian action: Localisation, NGOs, and authoritarianism,' *Understanding Authoritarianism,* University of Ostrava, Czech Republic.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2024, February). 'Humanitarian Skills and Competencies [guest lecture],' Humanitarian Studies Institute, Douala, Cameroon (online lecture).

Zadeh-Cummings, N., Toole, N., Duckworth, M., and Pujiono, P. (2023, April) 'Beyond "Humanitarian Organisations": A Whole of Community Approach to Emergencies.' *2023 Humanitarian Leadership Conference,* Centre for Humanitarian Leadership, Melbourne, Australia.

Stibral, A. A., **Zadeh-Cummings, N.,** and Clarke, M. 'Mastering Humanitarianism? A Survey of Postgraduate Humanitarian Action Courses;' and Chubb, D., and **Zadeh-Cummings, N.** (2021, November) 'Finding Space for Engagement with North Korea: Disability Issues in Human Rights and Humanitarian Aid,' *6th World Conference on Humanitarian Studies 2021*, Sciences Po, Paris, France (online attendance).

Banfill, J., Barrett, J., Vitantonio, C., and **Zadeh-Cummings, N.** (2021, April). 'Opening Doors in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea,' *2021 Humanitarian Leadership Conference,* Centre for Humanitarian Leadership, Melbourne, Australia (online conference).

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2020, October). 'Resetting Humanitarian Engagement with North Korea? Lessons from History,' *North Korea International: (Re)Evaluating, (Re)Viewing, and (Re)Connecting in a COVID World*, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and Institute for Far Eastern Studies, Kyungnam University, Seoul, Republic of Korea (online attendance).

Zadeh-Cummings, N., Book, M., and Harris, L. (2019, April and June). 'Humanitarianism in the DPRK: Sanctions and Future Directions,' *2019 Asia Pacific Humanitarian Leadership Conference*, Centre for Humanitarian Leadership, Melbourne, Australia; *World Congress for Korean Politics and Society 2019*, Konkuk University, Seoul, Republic of Korea.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2017, June). 'Humanitarian Principles and Dilemmas in the DPRK,' *International Studies Association International Conference*, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2017, June) 'Humanitarian Aid in North Korea: Trust and Personal Relationships,' *World Congress for Korean Politics and Society*, Yonsei University, Seoul, Republic of Korea.

Bagherzadeh, N. (2016, March). 'Humanitarian and Development Aid in the DPRK,' *New Authoritarianism in Asia Conference*, Ewha Woman's University, Seoul, Republic of Korea.

Bagherzadeh, N. (2015, September). 'Humanitarian Access in the DPRK [poster],'*A Quest for Humanitarian Effectiveness?*, University of Manchester, Manchester, England.

Selected media and commentary

Zadeh-Cumming, N. (2025, 30 January). 'To Build Peaceful Coexistence with North Korea, Focus on Ordinary North Koreans.' *United States Institute of Peace*. https://www.usip.org/publications/2025/01/build-peaceful-coexistence-north-korea-focus-ordinary-north-koreans

Corrado, J., featuring James, S., **Zadeh-Cummings, N.**, and De Angelis, M. (2023, 4 December). 'New Perspectives: Emerging Leaders Reframe North Korea Policy.' *Discussions with the Next Gen Korean Peninsula Specialists* [podcast]. National Committee on American Foreign Policy. https://open.spotify.com/episode/6muh679nLJe81zwy40tqoL?si=uycVzg4TWCck68_RTeXhg&nd=1&dlsi=e92a70f2089c41b3

Zwetsloot, J., featuring Chubb, D., and **Zadeh-Cummings, N.** (2023, 24 January). 'Distinguishing between North Korea humanitarianism and human rights – Ep. 272.' *North Korea News Podcast*. https://www.nknews.org/category/north-korea-news-podcast/older-podcasts/distinguishing-between-north-korea-humanitarianism-and-human-rights-ep-272/924132

Thornton, S., featuring **Zadeh-Cummings, N.** (2022, December). 'Humanitarian (re)engagement: supporting North Korean human security in the age of COVID | Dr. Nazanin Zadeh-Cummings.' *Discussions with the Next Gen Korean Peninsula Specialists* [podcast]. National Committee on American Foreign Policy. https://open.spotify.com/episode/3rUAWz7VCmsCd82xZMMLTD?si=qsTbGjKhTTqgw6JxCzGw-w&nd=1

Habib, B., featuring **Zadeh-Cummings, N.** (2022, 3 July). 'Altruistic humanitarianism and transitional justice with Nazanin Zadeh-Cummings.' *Edge Dwellers Café* [podcast]. https://edgedwellerscafe.podbean.com/e/nazanin-zadeh-cummings/.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. 2021. 'Why Diversity Matters for Humanitarian Negotiation.' *Centre for Humanitarian Leadership.* Available at https://centreforhumanitarianleadership.org/the-centre/news/diversity-and-humanitarian-negotiation/.

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2021). 'Need, Aid, and Root Causes: The Appropriateness of Humanitarian Response in the DPRK.' *Global NK*. https://globalnk.org/commentary/view?cd=COM000048#_ftn16

Zadeh-Cummings, N. (2019, 26 December). 'Lofty goals in challenging circumstances: UN hopes for North Korean aid in 2020.' *NK News*. https://www.nknews.org/2019/12/lofty-goals-in-challenging-circumstances-un-hopes-for-north-korean-aid-in-2020/

Zadeh-Cummings, N., and Spezza, G. (2019, 25 February). 'Trump-Kim summit II: North Korea's superficial modernisation.' *Lowy Institute Informer*. https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/trump-kim-summit-ii-north-korea-s-superficial-modernisation.

Spezza, G., and **Zadeh-Cummings, N.** (2019, 25 February). 'North Korea's silent health crisis.' *The New Humanitarian*. https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2019/02/25/north-korea-s-silent-health-crisis.

Spezza, G. and **Zadeh-Cummings, N.** (2019, 25 February). 'The Hanoi US-North Korea Summit: Why Pyongyang's Crippled Economy Is Central.' *The Diplomat*. https://thediplomat.com/2019/02/the-hanoi-us-north-korea-summit-why-pyongyangs-crippled-economy-is-central/.

Grants

United States Institute of Peace (USIP), 2025
Project title: Humanitarian Impact in North Korea
Role: Chief Investigator
Note: unable to complete project due to unlawful Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) takeover of USIP

Institute for Far Eastern Studies/Ministry of Unification Academic and Policy Research Projects on North Korea and Unification, 2023
Project title: (Re)engagement with North Korea: Dialogue and Planning for Future Opportunity
Role: Chief Investigator
Project partners: Mr James Banfill (Chulalongkorn University)

US Agency for International Development (USAID), 2021-2023
Project title: Changing the way the world responds to humanitarian crises: train current and future humanitarian leaders as innovative thinkers and dynamic achievers
Role: Co-investigator
Project partners: Action Against Hunger, CHL, Ms Mary Ana McGlasson (Deakin University), A/Prof Cai Wilkinson (Deakin University), Ms Justine De Rouck (Deakin University), Ms Manika Saha (Deakin University)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), 2022
Project title: UNFPA Humanitarian Leadership Training Program
Role: Co-investigator
Project partners: UNFPA, CHL, Ms Mary Ana McGlasson (Deakin University),A/Prof Cai Wilkinson (Deakin University)

Korea Foundation Fieldwork Fellowship, 2020
Project title: North Korea's Approach to International Assistance in Words and Practice
Role: Chief investigator
Project partner: Dr Youngsoo Yu (Kyungnam University)
Note: unable to embark on Fellowship due to COVID-19

Academy of Korean Studies Workshop and Conference Grant, 2020
Project title: Transitional Justice and the Korean Peninsula: A Role for Australia
Role: Co-investigator
Project partners: Dr. Danielle Chubb (Deakin University), Dr Sarah Son (University of Sheffield), Transitional Justice Working Group

Hong Kong Government Scholarship for PhD studies, 2014 – 2017

Evidence of Impact

- **Media engagement:** interviewed by media outlets including the *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), *Voice of America News* (United States), *NK News* (South Korea), *Devex* (United States), *Information* (Denmark), and *Special Broadcasting Service* (Australia)

- **Public engagement:**
  - speaker at Reah International event 'Opening Doors - The Practicalities of Humanitarian Engagement in the DPRK' (August 2025)
  - speaker at University Medical Centre Groningen (UMCG) event 'Humanitarian principles in crisis' (April 2025)
  - discussant at Cinema Politica Groningen screening of *Notes on Displacement* documentary by Khaled Jarrar (March 2025)
  - speaker at SIB Groningen event 'Challenges of Humanitarian Access in Conflict Areas' (June 2024)
  - speaker at Lawrence Academy event 'Live Action Leader – Alumni Series' (December 2022)
  - moderator for panel 'Should We Visit North Korea?' At Hong Kong International Literary Festival (November 2016)

- **Policy and advocacy:**
  - speaker/facilitator at Pledge for Change Virtual Gathering (November 2024)
  - panelist at Australian Red Cross's Humanitech Summit on 'Engaging community as experts' panel (May 2023)
  - panelist at Centre for a New American Security ‘Addressing the Adverse Effects of Economic Sanctions on Humanitarian Aid Efforts in North Korea’ event (2022)
  - panelist at Médecins sans Frontières ‘Becoming the MSF We Want to Be’ discussion (2021)
  - contributor to Save the Children submission to Parliamentary Inquiry (2020)

- **Collaboration with humanitarian organisations**:
  - four years experience conducting volunteer research with Doctors without Borders Hong Kong (2013 - 2018)
  - invited by Doctors without Borders Australia to present a lecture and run a workshop on North Korea (2020)
  - support for research by Humanitarian Advisory Group (2022)
  - Academic Panel member for IARAN's Future of Aid 2040 project (2024 - present)

- **Awards:**
  - Deakin University 2021 Faculty of Arts & Education Award (Student and Alumni Engagement)
  - Deakin University 2021 Faculty of Arts & Education Award (Industry and Community Engagement)
  - Deakin University 2019 Faculty of Arts & Education Award (Teaching Innovation)
  - Kialo 2017 Korea and the World Competition, third place

- **Professional development:** Untapp Advanced Facilitator Training (February 2021), RedR Essentials of Humanitarian Practice course (November 2021), eKomex/Universität Konstanz Interpretive Research Methods (March 2023)

- **Peer-review:** invited to conduct peer-review for academic publications including *Third World Quarterly, Disasters, Pacific Review, Visual Studies, International Political Sociology, Cogent Social Sciences, Asian Perspective, Public Administration and Development,* and *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*; steering group for Research for Development Impact Network disability inclusive research guidance notes

Other skills

- **Software:** Microsoft Office, MaxQDA, NVivo
- **Languages:**
  - English: native speaker
  - Spanish: heritage speaker
  - French: limited working proficiency
  - Korean: beginner
  - Dutch: beginner