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Media Contact:
media@globalyoungacademy.net
+49 (0)30 20370 - 653

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1

Policy input: contributions to global debate

What have young scientists got to offer?

The Global Young Academy (GYA) gives young scientists around the globe a platform to make their voices heard. Throughout 2015 we have responded to many invitations to contribute to reports, make statements and offer recommendations on a wide range of policy initiatives.

In 2015 InterAcademy Partnership (IAP) generously funded a GYA project to prepare a joint IAP/ GYA policy report on 'Solid Waste Management and Green Economy'. Co-authored by GYA member Sherien Elagroudy (Egypt) the draft report, which Elagroudy presented to international experts from 12 countries in October 2015, provides a snapshot of today's global solid waste management practices; it proposes alternative policies and remedial action for greening the waste sector across three world regions.

We also responded to the International Council for Science's (ICSU) invitation to the GYA to prepare presentations for several world conferences. Eijiro Sumii (Japan) represented the GYA at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) in Japan in March 2015. Here he gave a mini-presentation on the GYA at the ICSU booth at the main conference site; he was able to engage informally with many delegates on issues related to disaster risk reduction.

Also on the subject of disaster risk reduction, Shabana Khan (India) participated in the Second World Congress on Disaster Management in India in November 2015. She contributed a working paper on 'Positioning young scientists in the creation of knowledge and practice of Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change'. Following

this involvement, the GYA was invited to participate as an advisor to the UN Major Group for Children and Youth (UN MGCY) for the Youth Science Policy Interface Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Global sustainability was also the focus for members who responded to an invitation from UNESCO for policy briefs to be submitted to the third session of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in June 2015. Three GYA members submitted papers on fablabs, sustainable approaches to tackling emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases, and the sustainable development of natural product drugs. The papers were included in a special report on the UN's Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform.

A key element of our strategy is to help young researchers speak out on global issues; we will continue to send representatives to high level meetings and conferences where they present new research, talk about the GYA and demonstrate the passion, enthusiasm and rational approach of young scientists to global challenges.

UN Secretary-General's Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)

Co-Chair Eva Alisic represented the GYA as an observer at the UN SAB in St. Petersburg. She promoted the GYA's position that all scientific disciplines and generations of researchers have an important role to play in sustainable development.

2

Paris prepares for climate talks

Who has the ear of presidents and prime ministers?

Sustainable development and climate change are intrinsically linked. It is no surprise that the GYA and its members actively contribute to national, regional and international policy and discourse around climate change.

We provided three members with an unprecedented opportunity to engage in discussions at the scientific conference ahead of the Paris Climate Summit (COP21) in December 2015, the UN's flagship Conference of the Parties to review the implementation of the Convention on Climate Change.

Organised under the umbrellas of ICSU, Future Earth, UNESCO and major French research institutions, the summer event was the largest gathering of climate change scientists to date and a platform for the most recent research and forecasts on climate trends and theories. The event gave our delegates some excellent 'on-the-job' training as they networked with experts and experienced the interface between global science and policy mechanisms.

GYA member Jauad El Kharraz (France) served as co-convener for the session 'Transforming Society and Science for Sustainability' that focused on sustainability and climate solutions. In this session, GYA member Julia Baum (Canada) spoke on the role of young scientists in advancing knowledge and informing decisions on the changing climate. Also at the conference, GYA alumnus Manjur Karim (Bangladesh) presented a poster about his research on climate change and sustainability in Bangladesh.

After the conference our Working Group on Climate Change took the initiative to formally endorse the event's outcome statement, which was promoted during one of the events at the historic 2015 COP21.

Extract from outcome statement

"Science is a foundation for smart decisions at COP21 and beyond. Solving the challenge of climate change requires ambition, dedication, and leadership from governments, the private sector, and civil society, in addition to the scientific community."

See: <http://bit.ly/1Rn4UhY>



3

Refugee crisis: emotions and evidence

Is compassion compatible with science?

It has been called the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War. Millions of families and children are displaced, fleeing war torn areas of the Middle East and North Africa. So many have died on their journey; so many have been rejected by the communities where they seek shelter.

The scale of this migration, complicated by a complex political backdrop, has created nothing short of a humanitarian catastrophe with no quick fix. Appreciating the responsibility of scientists to inject scholarly knowledge into this often emotional debate, the GYA proposed an international meeting. We wanted to give young researchers an opportunity to share and reflect on the insights coming from various disciplines regarding refugees and migration.

As a result, the GYA, the Dutch Young Academy and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences hosted a two-day workshop in December 2015 in Amsterdam. We invited 20 selected academic experts and practitioners drawn from different disciplines and from over 10 countries across three continents. The event aimed to explore, with openness and honesty, the ethical, social, economic, health, legal and cultural dimensions of this crisis. How do all these dimensions affect any long-term solution?

In a significant move, the meeting also invited participation from displaced scientists, themselves refugees with first-hand experience of the situation.

Much of the discussion focused on social integration. These people have moved away from their

homes and livelihoods; their lives have been turned upside down. How can – and how should – society support their social integration and demonstrate solidarity? And are we actually speaking of a refugee crisis or of a crisis of solidarity?

Speakers highlighted major gaps in current understanding of the specific situation and the lack of research into mass migration and refugees in general. They also talked about how research and policy communities might work together more effectively to address this complex, politically charged and highly emotive issue.

Unlike a typical scientific conference, professional facilitators led interactive sessions in many iterative rounds, in order to generate and criticise new ideas and solutions. Delegates also toured the local Dutch Resistance Museum to stimulate discussions with a historical perspective.

Although the meeting offered no easy answers, it found consensus on some general principles: respect diversity, democracy and the fundamental values of human dignity, freedom, equality, solidarity and human rights.

Delegates agreed that the social, legal, economic and ultimately political integration of refugees require urgent attention with ‘fresh eyes’.

See the outcome document:
<http://bit.ly/1pnUet8>

4

GloSYS: comparing regional perspectives on researcher careers

What is life like for young scientists across regions?

There’s little doubt that our Global State of Young Scientists (GloSYS) precursor report hit the mark. With widespread media coverage, we presented our findings at numerous conferences, events and high-level meetings. Wherever we spoke, we always heard this: “Please, find out more!”

We answered this call and maintained our GloSYS momentum, firstly with a regional study in Southeast Asia. In cooperation with the National Science Technology and Innovation Policy Office (STI) and the National Science and Technology Development Agency (NSTDA), Thailand, the GYA started GloSYS ASEAN in November 2014 to investigate in greater detail the barriers and facilitators to the early research careers of scientists and scholars in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

Led by GYA Co-Chair Orakanoke Phanraksa, the GloSYS ASEAN team collected data from young scientists across selected ASEAN nations. The study called on young researchers in the region to answer an online questionnaire covering many factors relating to their current experiences as researchers, their career pathways and their aspirations as scientists and future leaders.

In June 2015 the project team met in Thailand to review interim data and plan the second phase of the study: qualitative, semi-structured interviews with selected participants to record the opinions and perspectives of young scientists in their own words. The meeting in Thailand also gave members of the GYA, the Malaysian NYA and the

newly-formed Indonesian NYA an opportunity to network and build relationships with each other, external partners and GYA GloSYS researcher Johannes Geffers.

The final report of the GloSYS ASEAN regional study will be published in 2016, followed by a major promotional and dissemination effort to ensure national and regional stakeholders address some of the factors that help and hinder the region’s research and innovation capacity and international leadership.

In the last months of 2015, the GYA learned that the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) will fund a second GloSYS regional study – GloSYS Africa. The three-year project started in late 2015 and will collect similar data to GloSYS ASEAN, which will make it possible to compare the lives of early career researchers across world regions. Researchers leading GloSYS Africa will use the findings to develop recommendations on how to improve career options and support for young scientists and scholars across the continent.

Did you know?

Following briefings on GloSYS ASEAN findings, one of the leading Thai government bodies has already launched a [pioneering mentoring programme](#) for its institutional scientists.



5

Launchpad for leadership: the Africa Science Leadership Programme

Who will be leading Africa's research community in 2025?

It took determination, tremendous effort, generous funding, comprehensive consultation, countless meetings and hours of voluntary support. But in 2015 we started something special: the Africa Science Leadership Programme (ASLP).

The first ever programme of its kind, the ASLP is a collaboration between the University of Pretoria, South Africa, the GYA and the Leopold Leadership Programme (Stanford University, USA). These partners conceived the programme to grow Africa's capacity for developing world-class science leaders. ASLP marks an important step towards closing the gap between developing and developed countries in terms of career support and development opportunities. With its pan-African outlook, the programme offers the region essential new mentoring and support structures so early-to-mid-career African scientists get the training they need to nurture their burgeoning leadership qualities.

Former and current GYA Co-Chairs Bernard Slippers, Rees Kassen and Eva Alisic have been the inspiration and driving force behind the programme's development and launch, backed by various other GYA members and members of NYAs in Africa. Generous financial support from the Robert Bosch Foundation will enable the year-long programme to take students for the next three years.

In June 2015 the first cohort of 20 young leaders, seven of whom are GYA members, met in Pretoria

for an inaugural week-long residential programme of intensive learning. Topics covered everything from collective leadership to science communication. Since this meeting, the fellows have focused on application and mentorship – allowing time to study leadership issues in more detail, experiment and reflect on their own practice. They will all meet again at a final follow-up workshop in April 2016 in Pretoria.

With the first fellowships nearing completion, the GYA is looking at how it can develop similar leadership programmes and mechanisms on other continents. "ASLP sets an example for similar programmes on the continent and elsewhere to follow, to prepare the next generation of scientists for a changing paradigm in science – more interdisciplinary, more globally connected and more relevant than ever before," Professor Slippers believes.

A fellow's perspective:

"I have never had formal training in leadership. This was a structured programme, but not in a traditional way. The programme was quite inspiring for me and I am taking back lots of things, especially the tools that I would like to implement into my daily activities."

Vidushi Neergheen-Bhujun, University of Mauritius

6

Politics meets science: The 5th GYA International Conference and Annual General Meeting (AGM)

What does the Maker Movement have to do with global science?

Seventy young scientists; twenty-six top researchers and policy experts; five days; and the world's largest log cabin: this was a meeting not to be missed!

The GYA's 2015 AGM took place at Chateau Montebello, Canada, a beautiful rustic hotel surrounded by nature, which has hosted a number of historic meetings including a G7 International Economic Summit in 1981. Our Canadian members had worked overtime to organise a programme packed with excellent science, thought provoking topics and plenty of time to mix and mingle, share ideas and forge relationships that will probably last for life.

Members especially enjoyed the trip to Ottawa. At the Science Fair Hack, GYA members encountered a new breed of 'do-it-yourself' scientists. These young Makers display remarkable diversity in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and educational background. The concept of DIY science stimulated later talks and discussion on the changing face of innovation.

The Ottawa excursion also introduced members to leading Canadian policy-makers and politicians, including the Governor General David Johnston and Member of Parliament Kirsty Duncan, now Minister for Science in Canada's new government. These guests shared their thoughts on the role of science in society and government. GYA co-founder Greg Weiss gave a personal account of research 'going viral', retelling his experience of

intense media focus when he announced he'd discovered [how to unboil an egg](#).

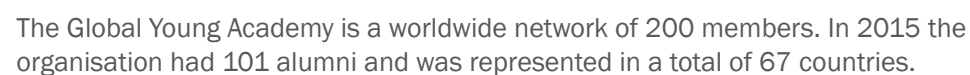
Back at the chateau, a session of lively TED-style presentations brought abstract ideas on science policy and globalisation to life.

There are always hours of discussion between members at our annual meetings – it is wonderful to watch early-career scientists become outspoken leaders. Often these discussions produce consensus. During a session on diversity the room agreed that typical categorisations (e.g. country of residence, developed and developing countries, gender, etc.) fail to give a full picture of diversity. Members said that rather than measure diversity, the scientific community should focus on how to understand and work with difference. Following the debate, one new GYA member commented on how discussions like this were not happening elsewhere.

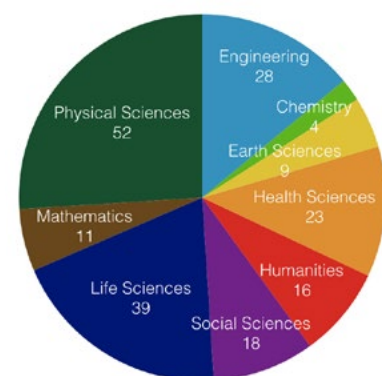
The GYA and all its members greatly appreciated the generosity, in terms of time and money, offered by the local hosts in organising the event. We also thank the IAP for its generous travel grants to members from developing countries.

Read more

<http://bit.ly/1WVevR9>

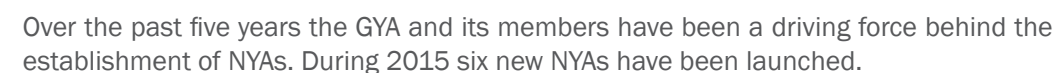


Graphic: Rob Jenkins / GYA



Our membership comes from six continents and spans across a diverse range of disciplines.

Graphics: Rob Jenkins / GYA



Map: Florian Wiencek / GYA



8

National Young Academies: a fast-growing family

Why should you get involved in an NYA?

Over the past five years the GYA and its members have been a driving force behind the establishment of NYAs. During 2015 we witnessed the launch of six NYAs, bringing the total to 30 worldwide.

Young researchers are key players in building the future of any nation. They must not be left behind, nor taken for granted. This was the message from Elizabeth Gabona, Director for Higher, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (HTVET) at the launch of Uganda's new NYA. Her remarks neatly explain why the GYA is committed to helping establish NYAs around the globe: we want young scientists to have a voice at the highest level.

In many of the countries in which the GYA has assisted the development of an NYA, GYA members have worked with the senior science academies. GYA members have helped to draft proposals for the creation of NYAs, worked on steering committees, played a key role in writing the constitutions of emerging NYAs and/or served on committees to select inaugural members. GYA leaders have facilitated introductions between young scientists and senior academies, thanks to the excellent relationships the GYA now has with many senior scientists and academy presidents through our observer status in the IAP.

The year kicked off with the launch of the Ethiopian Young Academy of Science (EtyAS). The Ethiopian Academy of Science took the decision to create EtyAS after listening to the GYA at the First Africa Young Academies Regional Conference in 2014.

The Indonesian National Young Academy was established in May 2015. Backed by the Indone-

sian Senior Academy (Akademi Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia, AIPI) and the US Kavli Frontiers of Science, the 40 founding members are all alumni of the country's Annual Science Frontiers Symposium, a national event for young scientists.

The National Academy of Sciences officially launched the new Ugandan NYA in September 2015. Representing the government, Mrs. Gabona said the launch was timely – young people needed a voice to lobby government and have a positive influence in their communities.

The Ghana Young Academy (GhYA) held its inaugural meeting and a one-day science communication workshop for young scientists and researchers in October 2015. New GhYA members were inducted alongside interim co-chairs and an acting administrator/chief executive officer. Several GYA members are taking leadership roles within this fledgling organisation.

With the launch of the Young Academy of Norway, Europe gained another NYA in October 2015, which brings the European NYA grouping up to nine. The arrival of Senegal's new NYA ANJSS brings the total in Africa to 10.

A blueprint

Our '[Blueprint for the Founding of National Young Academies](#)' provides essential advice and a step-by-step guide on how to create an NYA. It contains a draft constitution that fledgling NYAs can adapt for their specific circumstances and contexts.

9

Global perspectives: Worldwide Meeting of Young Academies

What happens when passionate researchers share ideas?

At any conference you would expect ample opportunity for chat over coffee and networking with peers. But official speed dating? At the Second Worldwide Meeting of Young Academies, held in Stockholm in November 2015 and co-organised with the Young Academy of Sweden (YAS), Young Academy representatives had just five minutes to try and find a perfect match. Pairs were challenged to draw up at least one joint project or find common points of interest between their NYAs. Later, discussion groups gave delegates a chance to explore their ideas for exchange and cooperation in more detail.

The speed dating was one of the more obvious ways the GYA and YAS played matchmaker, but every session was designed to stimulate inter-organisational dialogue. One of the most fervent and fruitful debates explored how Young Academies in Africa and beyond could increase the number of women members. Senegal, Ghana and South Africa all shared ideas that included quotas for women, targeting prominent women and prioritising women over men when two applicants were equally qualified.

During the final day, speakers celebrated the success and achievements of the NYA movement. GYA Managing Director Heidi Wedel remarked that NYAs have been involved in a large number of projects and activities, highlighting several key contributions to policy development, such as the consensus report from the fledgling Indonesian Young Academy of Sciences (ALMI) on its roadmap for future research. She also mentioned the outstanding outreach work of the South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS).

The event included a special one-day conference 'Scientific support for policy making in sustainable development: joining forces', organised by YAS and the GYA in conjunction with the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC, see page 14)

Recognising the importance of relationships, Co-Chair Eva Alisic proposed three marriages. Firstly, she suggested a marriage of disciplines – Young Academies bringing disciplines together through diverse membership and interdisciplinary projects. Secondly, she proposed a marriage of scientific and other forms of knowledge and experience, as Young Academies learn to appreciate that solutions to societal problems require more than hard science. Finally, she welcomed liaisons between scientists and politicians: why not build on and replicate successful pilots with regular science breakfasts, fellowships, internships or pairing schemes, she suggested, so that people can see how the 'other side' works?

Representation from around the world

The meeting welcomed delegates from the GYA, 25 NYAs and six similar initiatives and organisations from a total of 32 countries from four continents.



10

Joining up with the JRC

Does cooperation work in the real world?

Following excellent preliminary discussions and brainstorming during 2014, the GYA and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) signed a letter of intent for further collaboration. We held a formal signing ceremony in Berlin in October 2015 combined with a high-level panel on The Inequality of Climate Change.

We are excited to be working so closely with the JRC and benefit from its support and key contacts across the EU.

In early 2015 we launched our first joint project, a two-month-long horizon scanning exercise led by members in a specially established 'Invisible Worlds' working group. Participants from around the world collectively contributed nearly 70 abstracts from diverse disciplines. At a joint GYA-JRC workshop in Brussels in May 2015, 10 participants from the JRC, the GYA and the Young Academy of Scotland settled on a set of five overarching themes of 'Invisible Worlds' that are transforming society: the invisible worlds of data trails, safety risks, money-making, inequalities and governance. The team has analyzed the challenges and opportunities in each of these fields and will publish findings during 2016.

In collaboration with the Young Academy of Sweden, we also organised a joint conference with the JRC as part of the Second Worldwide Meeting of Young Academies in Stockholm (see page 13). The event featured several renowned scientists and opinion leaders who spoke with Young Academy representatives about the role of scientists and the place of research in global action to address the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Hans Rosling, Professor of

International Health, and listed as one of the 100 most influential people in the world by Time Magazine, delivered a stunning 'state of the nations' presentation. His overview of public health and education across the globe put the SDGs in perspective. Peter Honneth, Swedish representative on the JRC Board and former State Secretary for Education and Research in Sweden, admitted frankly that politicians often receive poor scientific advice. Whilst warning about the need to stay open to non-scientific knowledge, he asked young scientists to become involved in political debate and policy-making at all levels and to reach out to the public. Voster Muchenje (South Africa) asked 'Can science and good governance deliver dinner?' highlighting the importance of considering religion, culture and spirituality in relation to food security.

See the JRC summary report on the joint conference at: <http://bit.ly/1QLU8RN>

"The Global Young Academy is one of our key partners. With its outstanding young researchers, it helps us to provide the best scientific evidence possible for EU policies from both inside as well as outside the Commission. Our joint conference 'Scientific support for policy-making in sustainable development: joining forces' of November 2015 in Stockholm witnesses this advanced partnership. Our Joint Letter of Intent of October 2015 will certainly provide a platform to take our very successful cooperation even further."

Vladimír Šucha, Director General, DG Joint Research Centre, European Commission

11

World Science Forum

Does competition help create new ideas?

Ever eager to give our members opportunities to step up and get noticed, we decided to make the most of the World Science Forum (WSF) which took place in Budapest, Hungary, in November 2015. In collaboration with IAP, the World Association of Young Scientists (WAYS) and the International Consortium of Research Staff Associations (ICORSA), we ran a special side event 'Scoping the Future: Views and Ideas of Young Scientists to Tackle Global Challenges'.

This was the first time these four organisations have come together to give the emerging international young scientist movement a unified voice.

Among the 50 young scientists selected for this closed session were 12 GYA members. They were asked to analyze challenges and opportunities facing young scientists globally, identify strategies that link global challenges to career opportunities, and present policy recommendations that will empower young scientists to contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

After a round of intense brainstorming and project development, groups pitched their ideas to a distinguished panel of experts immediately prior to the WSF opening ceremony. The winning team proposed a gap analysis for the skills that will be required for the jobs of the future. Coupled with accurate jobs forecasts, this could help countries develop relevant education and training and create a talented future workforce.

"It was a dynamic session with original ideas from future science leaders," commented IAP Co-Chair, Mohamed Hassan. "It was a difficult decision to choose a winner. In the end we went with the team

that had the most visionary ideas for transforming SDGs into reality."

GYA members also assumed prominent roles during the main WSF sessions. GYA Co-Chair Eva Alisic spoke at the International Council for Science (ICSU)/JRC joint thematic session 'Building Resilience in a Changing World'. GYA member Abdeslam Badre (Morocco) spoke about his experiences at a session on 'Science Governance in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities'. Ivana Gadjanski (Serbia) addressed a packed hall of participants at the closing session, speaking as a representative of young scientists worldwide.

"Young scientists are ready to take an active role to be the interface between the policy-makers and the people, to help formulate and communicate the knowledge findings, in two directions – both to the policy-makers and to the public. This is why we, the young scientists, suggest a very practical solution: start a regular and structured forum in your local congress or parliament which allows young scientists to be actively involved and not just summoned ad hoc."

Ivana Gadjanski at the World Science Forum, Budapest, November 2015



12

Breaking boundaries: our ambassadors for science

Could you survive the pharaoh's curse?

Perfect for horror films and scaring tourists, but is the pharaoh's curse really true? What about all the mysterious deaths?

Egyptian legend seems an unlikely topic for the GYA, but not for Ghada Bassioni (Egypt) and Wilfred van der Wiel (The Netherlands), two members on our Young Scientist Ambassador Program (YSAP). Working on experiments with children from two schools in Enschede, The Netherlands, the researchers talked about how science explains the world – even helping to solve the deadly curse of the pharaoh.

Bassioni delivered a similar science day in September to students in Dortmund, Germany. Keeping the theme of the pharaoh's curse, she explored concepts of solubility, crystallisation and toxicity. Students discovered that radon, not magic, explains the mystery.

Through YSAP our members facilitate cultural, scientific, intellectual and educational exchanges. The programme supports our commitment to knowledge transfer between developed and developing countries.

Other YSAP outreach in 2015 included a special session to promote the Expedition Mundus game, developed by the Dutch Young Academy. In this inquiry-based science education game high school students take on the role of researchers exploring an unknown planet called Mundus. In this process the children think like scientists, formulate hypotheses, test them and then report the results.

Thomas Edison de la Cruz, a GYA member from the Philippines, led the gameplay during the first International Conference on Science, Research and Popular Culture held in Austria. Having promoted the game widely in the Philippines, de la Cruz now thinks playing at conferences could help Expedition Mundus find its way to younger students and do its work to inspire them to pursue a career in science.

Finally, in November 2015, GYA member Alexander Kagansky (UK) and Vidushi Neergheen-Bhujun (Mauritius) organised an extra-curricular session for children at the International School of Mauritius. They helped children build a model cell, create a 'chromosome dance' to show segregation during cell division, and explore endemic flora and fauna of Mauritius using microscopes. The ambassadors observed that science outreach needs active encouragement; they suggested that more teacher-scientist partnerships would also support a more inquiry-based culture in classrooms.

Knowledge exchange

"I strongly believe in the importance of education in a society, and teaching has provided me with my most rewarding professional experiences. The knowledge we accumulate as researchers and practitioners is valuable only if it is shared."

Ghada Bassioni

About the Global Young Academy

The Global Young Academy (GYA) was founded in 2010 with the vision to be the voice of young scientists around the world. The GYA empowers early-career researchers to lead international, interdisciplinary and intergenerational dialogue by developing and mobilising talent from six continents. Its purpose is to promote reason and inclusiveness in global decision-making. Members are chosen for their demonstrated excellence in scientific achievement and commitment to service. Currently there are 200 members and 101 alumni from 67 countries.

The academy is hosted at the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities (BBAW) in cooperation with the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. The GYA received its seed funding from the Volkswagen Foundation and has, since 2014, been funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). It has been supported by the IAP: the Global Network of Science Academies. The GYA has also benefitted from project funding from a variety of donors and partners.



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