

The Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2015

Young Scientist Meeting

Mission report

Dalian, China, 8-11 September 2015

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Background

Every year, the World Economic Forum selects up to 40 extraordinary young scientists under the age of 40 to participate alongside more than 1,500 business, government and civil society leaders from over 90 countries in the Annual Meeting of the New Champions. The nominees should possess exceptional creativity, thought leadership and growth potential in their field of research, demonstrate a global mind-set and strong alignment with the Forum's mission, possess an excellent ability to communicate about his/her research to senior leaders and be under the age of 40.

The Annual Meeting of the New Champions 2015 held in Dalian, People's Republic of China between 8 and 11 September 2015 saw the participation of four GYA members: Ivana Gadjanski (Serbia), Noble Banadda (Uganda), Michael Bronstein (Israel/Switzerland) and Vidushi Neergheen-Bhujun (Mauritius).

Young scientists were selected from all regions of the world and from a wide range of disciplines with a view to bringing value to the meeting under the theme of [Charting a New Course for Growth](#).

Since the global financial crisis, economies around the world have experienced lower growth in their productive capacity. Without technological progress, investment in productive capital and proactive responses to demographic shifts, the world will face a future of slow and imbalanced growth.

In addition, discoveries in science and technology are arguably the greatest agent of change in the today's world providing solutions for pressing global challenges. In this regard, the ninth Annual Meeting of the New Champions convened leaders from across the science and technology communities for the foremost gathering on innovation, entrepreneurship and technology. The goals were to

- Contribute breakthrough scientific and innovative ideas with leading experts and technologists
- Engage with a new generation of business innovators and research pioneers
- Advance innovation, productivity and trust through public-private dialogue
- Create opportunities for partnering and growth in China's rapidly evolving economy
- Network with other top scientists and experts from other fields

In addition, this year the organizers made possible for the Young Scientists to meet one day prior (Sept 8th) to the beginning of the Meeting and share insights and experiences in preparation of the Summit. Having a dedicated community event is a step forward to formation of the real community of Young Scientists (YS), similar to the already existing communities of Young Global Leaders, Technology Pioneers etc.

Throughout the Summit, private YS-only events were organized which also significantly contributed to this aim of forming a compact YS community.

These events included:

Sept 9th - Breakfast discussion panel - From Bench to Market

Title: **What opportunities and challenges await the scientist who decides to build a start-up?**

With Joe Palca, Science Correspondent NPR; Nina Tandon, CEO, EpiBone Inc., Martin Bruncko, CSO/CFO, AeroMobil



Sept 10th - Breakfast discussion panel - Communicating Science to Leadership

Title: **How can scientists have the most impact when in dialogue with senior decision makers in business or government?**

With Klaus Schwab, Chairman and Founder of the World Economic Forum, Mariette DiChristina, Editor-in-Chief, Scientific American, Neil C. Hawkins Chief Sustainability

Officer, The Dow Chemical Company and Sir Mark Walport, Chief Science Advisor to the UK Government



Sept 10th - Private YS Session - Grand Challenges and Grand Opportunities in Biomedical Science

A conversation with Dr. Francis Collins, Director, National Institutes of Health, USA, Moderated by Dr. Joe Palca, Science Correspondent, National Public Radio, USA.

Sept 10th - Private YS Session

Private meeting with Carlos Moedas, EU Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation, and Jean Pierre Bourguignon, President of the European Research Council



Sept 11th - Breakfast discussion panel - Meet the leader

Join Sir Philip Campbell, Editor-in-Chief, Nature for a conversation on 'What should Nature's news and comment teams be focusing on above all to reflect the interests of younger researchers, in order to influence funders and universities or others? The focus of Nature's coverage needs to be on actions for change, rather than fretting about problems.'



A visit to the Dalian University of Technology was scheduled on the last day of the conference where we had the pleasure of a talk from Charlotte Liu, President Greater China Springer Nature on Science in China at a Turning Point: Focusing on Research Talent and Social Impact.



Following this talk there was a guided tour of the National Key Coastal and Offshore Engineering Laboratory and a visit to the Dalian Senyint Digital Medical System - A major provider, operator and facilitator of telemedicine and cloud health services, was established in June 2010 in Dalian Software Park.



National Key Coastal and Offshore Engineering Laboratory

World Economic Forum and the Young Scientists Community

The World Economic Forum (WEF) (<http://www.weforum.org/en/index.htm>) is an international institution committed to improving the state of the world through public-private cooperation; the Forum is best known for its annual winter meeting in Davos. However, since 2007 the Forum also organizes a summer Annual Meeting of New Champions (also called Summer Davos), held annually in China, alternating between the cities of Dalian and Tianjin. The Summer Davos usually brings together some 1,500 top business leaders, international political leaders, selected intellectuals, journalists, Young Global Leaders, Social Entrepreneurs, Global Shapers, Technology Pioneers, Global Growth Companies and Young Scientists. This year, 2015, was introduced the 2-year program for the Young Scientists - meaning that a Young Scientist will be invited to two successive Annual Meetings of New Champions. GYA Members - Vidushi Neergheen-Bhujun, Michael Bronstein and Ivana Gadjanski were among this first batch of Young Scientists to take part in the new 2-year program, having participated both at AMNC 2014 and AMNC 2015. The previous year YS participants acted as mentors to the new YS. This provided a better sense of having a community.



GYA members: Noble, Ivana, Vidushi and Michael, from left to right

Outcome from the WEF meeting

The participation in the conference has been satisfying and productive in several ways.

For instance, Michael Bronstein gave a lecture at the Betazone session: How to Build an Intelligent Machine, a session dedicated to the vision about the future of artificial intelligence and machine learning, moderated by Jusine Cassel, Associate Vice Provost at Carnegie-Mellon University. Michael presented his vision on the role of image perception and 3D sensing technologies he has been working on at Intel. He shared the stage with Bjoern Stenger from Imperial College and Louis-Philippe Morency from Carnegie-Mellon University, who addressed additional aspects of artificial intelligence, including emotion perception and artificial creativity.



Noble Banadda, Michael Bronstein and Ivana Gadjanski contributed to the WEF

Agenda in Focus: Inside Science [blog series](#) prior to the meeting:

- Noble Banadda: **How our waste can save the world**
<https://agenda.weforum.org/2015/09/how-our-waste-can-save-the-world/>
- Michael Bronstein: **How 3D sensors are changing our lives**
<https://agenda.weforum.org/2015/09/how-3d-sensors-are-changing-our-lives/>

- Ivana Gadjanski: **Why scientists need to think like entrepreneurs**
<https://agenda.weforum.org/2015/09/why-scientists-need-to-think-like-entrepreneurs/>

Ivana Gadjanski also participated at the **Briefing Session: Unexpected Discoveries - Young Scientists at AMNC**, together with three other YS: [Mande Holford](#), [Louis-Philippe Morency](#) and [Panayiota Poirazi](#). The Session was moderated by [Oliver Cann](#),



On the one hand, it has been a very positive and enriching experience for the GYA members in terms of interaction and multidisciplinary exchange with global leaders like Francis Collins, Director, National Institutes of Health; Jean-Pierre Bourguignon, President of the European Research Council, Yuichiro Anzai, President of The Japan Society for the Promotion of Science; Carlos Moedas, Commissioner of Research, Science and Innovation at the European Commission. The scientific exchange has been very beneficial to all GYA members, particularly in discussions on sustainable consumption and production in a circular economy, with the realisation that we need a more circular economy, i.e. re-using, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products, and with a change in mind-set to accept that what used to be regarded as 'waste' can be turned into resources which can be managed more efficiently throughout their respective life cycle.

Debrief session and conclusions of Young Scientist

The WEF founder Prof. Klaus Schwab presented his concept paper about the new Industrial Revolution, and the impact it will have on our society, ways of doing business, and the global economy. He stressed that this new revolution is unprecedented in human history and might have life-changing effect on the next generation of people. He reached out to Young Scientists to contribute their vision on the impact new technological and scientific discovering powering this revolution may have on the future.

The WEF indicated that it will provide this positive feedback to the institutions and is committed to come back to the Young Scientists with ideas and asking inputs.

The GYA members, introduced GYA to the other Young scientists at the WEF and invited them to apply for membership by 27 September 2015. Particularly Vidushi Neergheen-Bhujun was very active in promoting GYA and presenting its program and the new membership call via the GYA brochure.

The WEF AMNC coverage was partly done on social media (Twitter and Facebook) by the participating GYA members using the hashtag #gya and @GlobalYAcademy, however it was technically difficult due to the firewall put by the Chinese Government, that was not lifted for WEF AMNC as it was the case last year.

This has been a rich experience to explore the influence of new business models, industries and technologies in the context of sustainable and inclusive growth.