

News Release

Young Academies issue statement to address how Science can help with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

26 October 2017 – Young Academies of sciences around the globe feel they have a role to play in solving the dilemmas the world is facing today and in improving the world through scientific discovery. This claim is made in a joint statement on “The role of Young Academies in achieving the UN SDGs”, which is published today by the Global Young Academy (GYA) and 36 national young academies and young academy initiatives.

The statement focuses on the question of how young academies in general, and young scientists in particular, can contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how science and technology can best be harnessed towards achieving the SDGs.

The authors recommend that Young Academies should and can take on a greater role in science advice at a national, regional and global level.

They propose three main areas for young scientists’ engagement with the SDGs:

- by offering sound policy advice and contributing interdisciplinary science advice to the SDG implementation, thereby getting recognized as an independent part of their national, regional and global policy advice systems;
- through science communication, with Young Academies in an excellent position to bridge the divide between science and the public, and raise the understanding of the SDGs among pupils, and within civil society and the media; and
- through capacity enhancement: training Young Scientists in the SDG processes, implementation and monitoring, as well as in leadership skills.

The statement unequivocally states that Young Academies can and should play a central role in conceptualising, developing and implementing strategies towards achieving the SDGs. The statement also calls on policy-makers and senior academies of sciences to work with the Young Academies and young scientists in their regions and to come together and work jointly towards a “global science” driving sustainability.

The statement is a direct outcome of the Third Worldwide Meeting of Young Academies in July 2017, hosted in Johannesburg, South Africa, by the South African Young Academy of Science (SAYAS), and co-organised by the GYA, which also demonstrates the dynamic nature of the ever-growing young academy network.

LINK to statement: <https://globalyoungacademy.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Statement-RoleYoungAcademies-SDGs-Oct2017.pdf>

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3rd Worldwide Meeting of Young Academies 2017

<https://globalyoungacademy.net/events/3rd-worldwide-meeting-of-young-academies-2017/>

UN Sustainable Development Goals

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/?menu=1300>

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 134 alumni from 70 countries. The academy is hosted at the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina. The GYA received its seed funding from the Volkswagen Foundation, and since 2014, it has been funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and supported by the InterAcademy Partnership (IAP). The GYA also benefits from project-specific funding from a variety of donors and partners.

The Global Young Academy and the network of National Young Academies

Young Academies are academies formed by early and mid-career young scientists and scholars who typically have been selected for the excellence and impact of their research and their commitment to service. These Young Academies work as the voice of young scientists for the advancement of issues of importance to society and to young scientists.

One of the major aims of the Global Young Academy (GYA) is to support the establishment and development of National Young Academies (NYAs) and similar bodies, to cooperate with them and provide opportunities for networking and capacity enhancement. Overall, 33 NYAs and more than 10 similar bodies now exist worldwide, many having been established with support from the GYA and its members. The global network of Young Academies continues to grow dynamically, with ever more NYAs being established all over the world and up to six new academies expected to be established in 2017. (see <https://globalyoungacademy.net/national-young-academies/>).

Aware of the role young scientists can play to enhance Science, Technology & Innovation (STI) and to drive the implementation and monitoring processes for the UN SDGs, the GYA is an active facilitator and supporter of its members and NYA partners worldwide.